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TRAVELLER

THE COASTAL ISSUE

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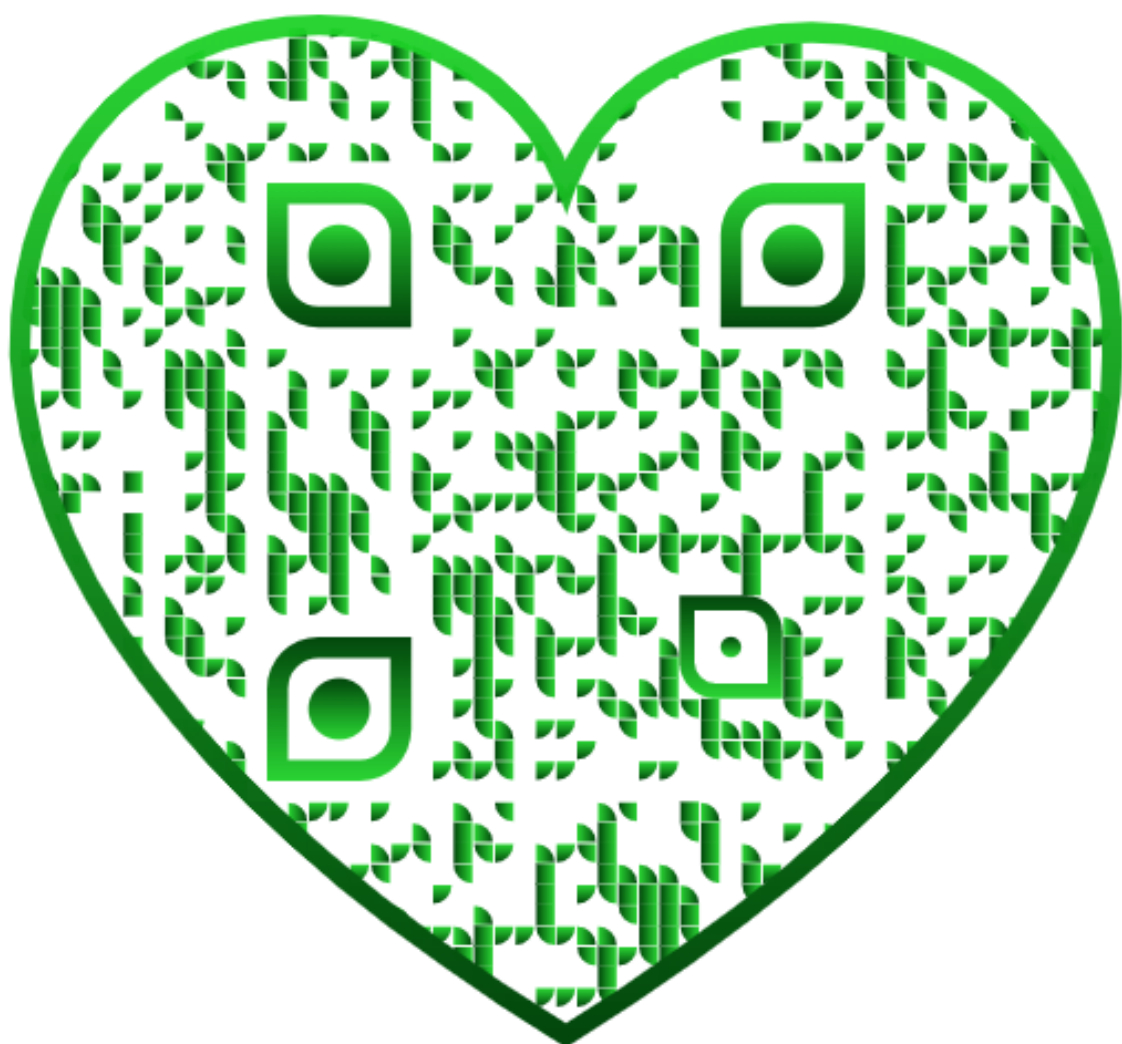
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GOURMET TRAVELLER JANUARY 2026

Lennox Hastie Pineapple Reykjavik Los Cabos Lisbon

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A photograph of a European city street. On the right is a multi-story building with a light-colored facade, arched windows, and balconies with dark railings. A tree with green leaves is in the foreground on the right. A street lamp with a curved arm is in the center. On the left, there are more trees and a sidewalk with a few people. The overall atmosphere is calm and urban.

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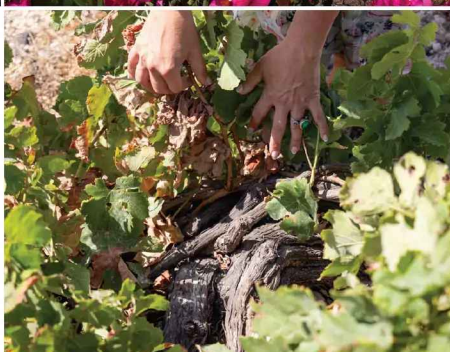
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FOOD

JANUARY

72 Everyday

Bruschetta with whipped feta, jamón and cherries	72
Prawns with fragrant curry leaf butter and raita salad	73
Smoky pork loin tacos with shaved cabbage, pickled onion and salsa verde	74
Sticky Xinjiang-spiced tofu skewers with Chinese-style slaw	75
Peri peri char-grilled chicken with potato and corn salad	76
Green tea soba noodles with poached chicken and green miso sauce	77
Wild rice and lentil salad with pickled grapes, walnuts and za'atar dressing	78
Barbecued butterflied lamb leg with green fattoush and mint yoghurt	79
Coconut sponge puddings with mango and amaretto syrup	80
Peach and raspberry fool with candied hazelnut	81
MASTERCLASS	
Frozen strawberries and cream dacquoise	82

86 Club tropicana

Sweet and savoury creations that champion in-season pineapple.

Snapper and pineapple ceviche	89
Pineapple Spicy Margarita	89
Vietnamese spring rolls with pineapple nước chấm	90
Spiced crisp pork belly with pineapple achcharu and Hawaiian buns	92
Vietnamese beef short ribs with pineapple salsa and vermicelli salad	94
Pineapple granita with yoghurt, honey and thyme	94

96 Turn up the heat

Thrilling grill recipes from Firedoor chef Lennox Hastie.

Barbecued clams with butter beans and jamón	98
Grilled bavette with charred onions and romesco	98
Chistorra with talo and warm honey	100
Charred corn with Espelette butter and Manchego	100
Grilled sardines on pan con tomate	103
Octopus with braised chickpeas and sobrasada	103
Whole flounder with pil-pil and capers	104
Grilled cos with anchovies, capers and chilli	104

106 Family ties

Nat Thaipun calls on family recipes and forgotten traditions in her new cookbook of Thai cuisine.

Baked glass noodles with prawns	107
Southern Thai dry curry pork stir-fry	108
Fish cakes	109
Steamed squid with lime and chilli	111
Sweet roti	111

REGULARS

- 10 **UPFRONT**
Editor's letter and news.
- 22 **CAFÉ CULTURE**
Caffeine hits.
- 23 **MEET THE MAKER**
Ruffle Farm's Jess Coulson.
- 24 **FOUR OF A KIND**
Seafood sauces.
- 26 **REVIEW** Daphne.
- 30 **DRINKS NEWS**
New openings and releases.
- 32 **COASTAL PAIRINGS**
Seafood-friendly sips beyond white wine.
- 34 **COCKTAIL HOUR**
Peggy Paloma.
- 36 **DESIGN** Grill Americano.
- 40 **OBJECT OF DESIRE**
Louis Vuitton camera box.
- 42 **FROM THE ARCHIVE**
Looking back on 60 years.
- 114 **TRAVEL NEWS**
The latest arrivals.
- 116 **TIME TRAVELLERS**
Luxury timepieces.
- 117 **BEAUTY KIT**
Skincare on the move.
- 154 **THE ART OF TRAVEL**
The power of sea voyages.



ON THE COVER

Prawns with fragrant curry leaf butter and raita salad, p73
Recipes Maxwell Adey
Photography Ben Dearnley
Styling Jenn Tolhurst

SUBSCRIBE

magshop.com.au/GMT
Details p150

FEATURES

44

On the radar

Upcoming openings, launches and reveals for the calendar.

50

Hot in the city

Sandy feet and urban delights play neighbours at these destinations.

56

Worth your salt

Ivy Carruth explores the essential's recent redemption arc.

60

Shore things

How to tap into the beach's edible souvenirs.

64

The new nostalgia

Retro motels for soothing summer escapes.

TRAVEL

118

Mellow Mexico

The other side of Cabo.

128

**Mondrian
Gold Coast**

We check out
Burleigh's new hotel.

144

**Mediterranean
coasting**

From port to plate across
European dining destinations.

130

**Postcards
from Lisbon**

Portugal's capital quietly
harbours an impressive
restaurant scene.

138

Twilight zone

Iceland's surreal summer,
explored by car.





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EDITOR'S LETTER

Welcome to the new-look *Gourmet Traveller*. The beginning of a new year is, after all, as good a time as any to refresh the magazine's typefaces and layout designs.

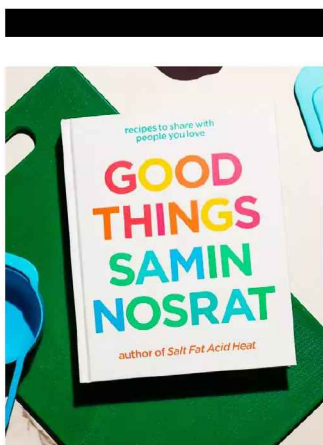
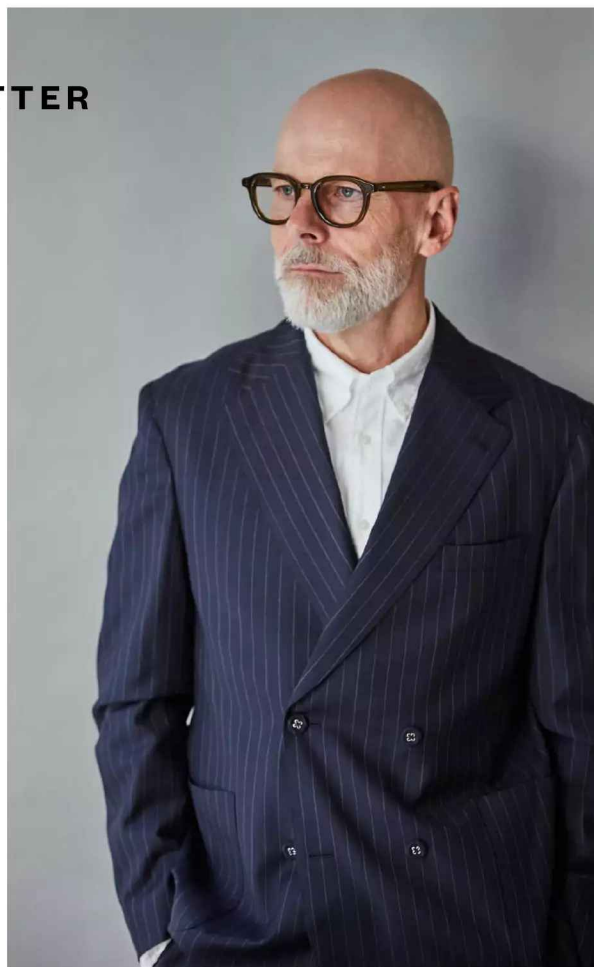
Keep your eyes peeled for some new regular sections in the magazine you know and love, such as the Café Culture page, kicking off with a look at Neil Perry's Café Margaret in Sydney's Double Bay. There's also a deep dive into restaurant design, fresh content on timepieces and beauty, plus an expanded travel news section.

As far as our food section is concerned, you'll be pleased to hear it's business as usual, bringing you more than 40 inspiring pages of recipes each month from some of the best chefs and culinary writers around.

Meanwhile, for a bit of fun as we approach our 60th anniversary in November, we'll take a trip down memory lane each issue with a look back through the archives of the magazine, which has been highly entertaining for the team.

I hope you enjoy the refreshed *Gourmet Traveller* as much as we all do.

David



This month's challenge...

We had a great response to our inaugural cookbook club last issue, so to inspire this month's culinary efforts, we've selected Samin Nosrat's *Good Things* (Penguin Books, \$65). We're certainly in good hands; her first book, *Salt, Fat, Acid, Heat* was an instant bestseller when it was published in 2017, spawning a hit Netflix series of the same name. The California-based author and chef says *Good Things* contains 125 of her most beloved everyday recipes, so choose one that speaks to you, get creative in the kitchen, and show us the results by tagging us on Instagram.

Post your accomplishments and we'll repost the very best.  @gourmettraveller





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*Château l'Hospitalet
Grand Vin Blanc,
Languedoc-Roussillon,
France*

ENTRÉE

Roasted Chateaubriand
Bordelaise sauce and
baby potatoes

or

Porcini mushroom risotto with
ricotta cream and fried basil

*Héritage Kosmos,
Languedoc-Roussillon,
France*

DESSERT

Raspberry caramelised
millefeuille with Madagascan
vanilla cream

*Château du Levant
Sauternes, Bordeaux, France*



Table talk

WORDS **GEORGIA CONDON**

NEWS, RESTAURANT
OPENINGS AND FOOD
FOR THOUGHT



PHOTOGRAPHY SAM THWAITES

Cooking over binchōtan charcoal at the newly opened Masonry restaurant in Niseko, Japan (p15).

FOOD NEWS

CREATIVE PEOPLE, SMART TOOLS AND
BRIGHT IDEAS FOR CULINARY INSPIRATION



PROFILE

Morgan Hoey,
HOTEL MARVELL, BYRON BAY

For our coastal issue, the culinary director talks all things oysters.

You must have seen a few shucking injuries overseeing Byron Bay Oyster Bar & Seafood Restaurant, the hotel's main eatery. Everyone's got themselves really badly at some point. Off to hospital. That's why I don't rush people. It takes thousands to become an expert. The measure is, out of a dozen, how many can you shuck perfectly, without breaking the shell, stabbing the oyster, or putting the knife through your hand. Be firm, but gentle. Once you reach a flow state, you could almost close your eyes and do it by feel.

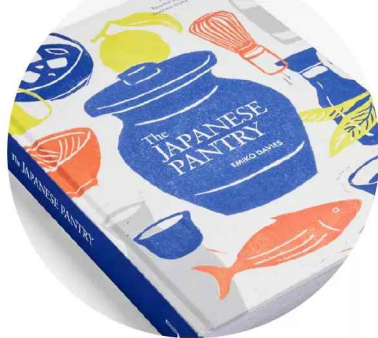
Tell us about your fancy tank. It holds 500 dozen oysters – that's 6000 – and they're super-happy in there. When you take one out, it spits water at you, which is a good sign. It basically mimics the ocean, with a stable temperature and filters that keep the water absolutely pristine.

Do all restaurants have an oyster tank these days? It's growing but honestly, I see places serving oysters that have been out of water too long. Or they're kept on ice, and end up half submerged, tasting of nothing. Chefs like Josh Niland are setting a new standard, celebrating salinity. Not a drop of fresh water will touch his seafood. It takes someone like Josh, who's passionate about a specific thing, to help us evolve. But there are plenty of chefs thinking, "This new guy doesn't know what he's talking about." They'll never change.

What's in your tank right now? We have Sydney Rock from Merimbula, Port Stephens Pacific, and angasi oysters from South Australia, which have been a First Nations delicacy forever. Those three are a good combination with some nice contrast in flavour profiles. If people come in who've never tried an oyster, or they've been scared off by prior experience, we'll steer them towards something easygoing like a Pacific, with a splash of mignonette. We call that our gateway oyster. Far better to start there, than smashing them with an angasi that's much bigger, with lots more copper and brine.

Is that what the word "merroir" is all about? Yeah – it's the same as "terroir" for wine. Every part of an oyster's growing conditions will go into the final taste – things like the weather, temperature, whether they grow in mud, or not.

Just one more thing: was the water for your tank really collected from the ocean during a king tide? It's a bit spiritual. Very Byron. But the moon's good for you, right? We had this one oyster who arrived with a badly damaged shell. We put him in his own little basket, and he reformed his whole shell over a few months. We didn't eat him. We just let him hang out. hotelmavell.com.au



The Japanese Pantry: From Sake to Soy, Essential Ingredients for Japanese Home Cooking (Smith Street Books, \$55) is the seventh book from Australian-Japanese food writer Emiko Davies. Exploring essentials like soy sauce, miso, seaweed and tea, Davies delves into their history and significance, sharing approachable recipes founded in simplicity.



CATCH OF THE DAY

Chefs Stephen Nairn and Luke Headdon are channelling their experiences at high-end restaurants like Omnia, Yugen, Vue de Monde and Eleven Madison Park into their new Prahran Market fishmonger, Portside. Stocking seafood from Australia's top fishers, they aim to make high calibre ingredients accessible to all. Cabinets are stocked with fish, crustaceans, oysters, uni and more, plus elevated cook-at-home preparations like fish Wellingtons, skewers and seafood boils.



SUMMER DINING TO LOVE

The 2026 Australian Open isn't just about on-court action; it's also serving elite eats. Melbourne-made highlights include Japanese konbini-inspired eatery Suupaa at the Western Courts and Entrecôte returning with its hugely popular steak frites-loaded Mitraillette baguette. Handling the casual cuisine are D.O.C. pizzeria, Season's Vietnamese fried chicken and Wonder Pies. Among the high-end AO Reserve program, Simon Rogan (of three-Michelin-starred English restaurant L'Enclume) and Peter Gilmore will present curated experiences; Shimpei Raikuni of Brisbane's Sushi Room will serve an exclusive private omakase experience; and award-winning bar Caretaker's Cottage will host an exclusive Bar Suite. 12 January to 1 February, ausopen.com



SURF TO SLOPES

Popular Bali-based (and majority Australian-owned) wood-fired restaurant concept Masonry has expanded to Japan. The new slope-side restaurant at the Niseko Kyo hotel embodies the group's approach to lively but refined dining, with local produce like Hokkaido milk and Furano Wagyu, plus signature dishes reimagined with elements like kombu or mandarin kosho. The blend of traditional techniques, like curing and fermenting, with modern creativity extends to the bar program of cocktails.



From far left: chef and restaurateur Rick Stein; and the dining room at Rick Stein at Coogee Beach.

BEACHFRONT ARRIVAL

Celebrated British chef Rick Stein has opened his largest restaurant in Australia overlooking Coogee Beach.

FOR DECADES, RICK STEIN HAS GRACED our television screens, sharing his adoration for the spoils of the sea. He opened his first restaurant in Cornwall, in 1975, dotting several more around the UK coastline in the years since, as well as branching out to our own shores.

Following the popularity of his restaurants at Bannisters properties in Mollmook and Port Stephens, the English chef opened Rick Stein at Coogee Beach in December, marking his first venue in an Australian capital.

"I wouldn't have wanted to open in the CBD," Stein tells *Gourmet Traveller*. "The ethos of my restaurants almost requires that they be by the sea."

Taking its place on the ground level of the newly opened InterContinental Sydney Coogee Beach, the restaurant has a relaxed coastal aesthetic across a main dining room, outdoor dining terrace, two semi-private dining rooms and a bar.

The 224-seat venue is a step up from his more boutique portfolio on the NSW south coast ("a monster", in Stein's words) but its spirit remains the same. "It's mostly about straight-off-the-beach eating, with a nucleus of more formal dining."

Naturally, seafood is the star of the show, Stein having spent time at co-ops near his Bannisters venues and at the Sydney Fish Markets, sourcing produce for the menu, whose delivery is overseen

by head chef Colin Chun (Hilton Sydney, Pullman and W Taipei).

Quality aside, Stein is inspired by the variety on offer here. "Fish like snapper and blue-eye ... flathead is a favourite. There's so much flavour in so many of the species," he says. "I like paying attention to under-appreciated species too, like leatherjacket."

His voice shines through on the menu: XO pipis are described as "one of my favourite seafood dishes – particularly when made with Australian pipis". Alongside the listing for oysters Charentaise, he invites diners to "eat an oyster, take a bite of sausage, then a good gulp of cold white wine".

Rick's fish and chips, in the style of his sell-out Padstow chippie, are fried in beef dripping and served with mushy peas and tartare sauce, while a grilled blue-eye trevalla comes with Hollandaise alone.

A small bunch of dishes including a steak frites (sirloin, with Café de Paris butter) placate land lovers. Desserts, meanwhile, feel English with a cherry trifle, steamed honey sponge, and chocolate fondant in the mix.

As part of the InterContinental Sydney Coogee Beach, Stein's restaurant joins 198 renovated guest rooms (including 22 suites with outdoor baths); Mediterranean-inspired restaurant Shutters; and pickleball courts on the beachfront. An infinity pool, leisure deck with a poolside bar and day spa are set to open in March. ricksteinatcoogeebeach.com.au



Add a sense of summer to the everyday with the new Dolce Dolce collection from Alex and Trahanas. The hand-painted range of ceramics includes teacups and saucers, servingware and dessert bowls splashed with tones of stonefruit, gelato and chilled rosé. alexandtrahanas.com



GARDEN RESTAURANT GOES GRAZING

Award-winning regional restaurant The Zin House at Lowe Wines in Mudgee has relaunched as Zin Food & Wine, with owner Kim Currie steering towards a relaxed, grazing-style offering designed to complement the property's wines. "My approach to cooking and dining has changed since I started The Zin House," says Currie. "I want to make great food that is inclusive and accessible, not just for special occasions. It's fun, communal and non-pretentious." The new approach sees seasonal dishes using Central West and on-site garden-to-table produce paired with a tasting flight of wines for \$95 per person, and can be supplemented with house-made pasta or local cheeses. Glasses and bottles of Lowe Wines can also be paired, or purchased to take away. lowefamilywineco.com.au/zin



THE FINISHING TOUCH

The ideal accessory to any long lunch, the Lady Dior bag got its name when it was gifted to Princess Diana by the First Lady of France, Bernadette Chirac, and fast became her favourite handbag. It's been a Dior icon ever since and this year, in the hands of the brand's new creative director Jonathan Anderson, it gets a fresh and playful lease on life. Anderson often displayed an affection for whimsically organic motifs while at Loewe, and is clearly continuing that tradition at Dior, embellishing this edition of the Lady Dior bag in green lambskin with embroidered four-leaf clovers – in a nod to his Irish heritage – along with an oh-so adorable red ladybug.

\$17,000, dior.com

RESTAURANT NEWS

THE LATEST FROM RESTAURANTS AND CHEFS
ACROSS AUSTRALIA AND THE WORLD



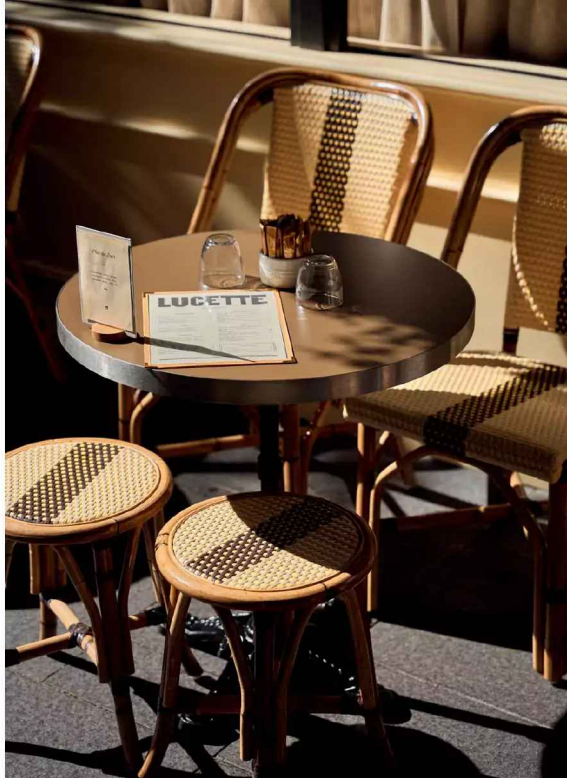
NEW SOUTH WALES

WATERMANS

The Bentley Restaurant Group (Eleven Barrack, King Clarence, Bentley Restaurant + Bar) has a new venue, inspired by the Eastern Mediterranean. At the newly opened Watermans, in Barangaroo, executive chef Darryl Martin (Barzaari) is working with the flavour profiles of Greece, Cyprus, Türkiye and Lebanon, with a custom wood-fired grill and oven at the kitchen's core. Key dishes include quail skewers with quince and carob glaze and grilled lime; smoked pumpkin with hazelnut muhammara and purslane; and grilled prawns with saffron orzo, chervil and tarama. The 120-seat restaurant's warm, timber-led aesthetic is enhanced by an outdoor dining area with plant-covered pergolas, water glimpses and festoon lighting.

SAKURA HOUSE

The duo behind The Waratah in Darlinghurst has expanded to a late-night izakaya rooted in Japanese artisan culture, tucked in a CBD basement. Cocktails include the signature Sakura Sour (Haku Vodka Lemon, Australian yuzu and sparkling wine) with Japanese whisky, gin, saké, shochu and tea in the mix. Plates from chef Nick Sherman (Cho Cho San) encompass calamari stuffed with Japanese rice with a yuzu emulsion and charred lemon; takoyaki skewers with shichimi and bonito; and mochi-wrapped bites of white chocolate and matcha ice-cream. Indigo-dyed fabrics, shoji lanterns and eclectic Japanese trinkets make up the décor, while the soundtrack of throwback and deep-cut pop embraces the venue's 4am licence.



Clockwise from top left: Lucette's terrace; cocktails and snacks at Disuko. Opposite: a spread at Watermans.

VICTORIA

LUCETTE

On Bowral's high street, the owners of Franquette Crêperie have opened Lucette: a bistro serving from petit-déjeuner to dinner providing another reason to visit the Southern Highlands. "Lucette is about bringing the joie de vivre of French bistro dining to Bowral," says owner Julien Besnard. "It's French at heart, designed for the neighbourhood." Paris-born chef Guillaume Dubois (Monopole) is doing three-cheese soufflés with onion jam, pear and walnuts; moules marinière with frites; and beef Bourguignon for two, with a drinks list starring French wine, apéritifs and classic cocktails. Gallic energy extends to the look and feel, with soft textures and buttery shades running across the dining room and outdoor terrace.

DISUKO

The Melbourne rooftop formerly home to Madame Brussels has become modern Japanese joint Disuko. The 1980s Tokyo-inspired venue from Mamas Dining Group (Hochi Mama, Windsor Wine Room) comprises a dining room and bar, terrace, eight-seat omakase counter for 12-course sushi seatings and a private dining room. The izakaya-inspired menu lists dishes like a Japanese McDonald's-esque Fillet-O-Ebi sando; wagyu tataki with yuzu kosho cream, ponzu and a crisp potato; and hibachi-grilled pork belly with tare and bottarga. Signature cocktails using ingredients such as yuzu syrup, red shiso-infused vodka and toasted sesame bitters are joined by Highballs, Spritzes and a specialty saké selection, while Japanese design

elements like red timber, black lacquer and kumiko joinery are contrasted with glass blocks, leather and disco balls.

EMBER

The Continental in Sorrento is celebrating 150 years by firing up a new era of dining led by chef Scott Pickett. Popular Peninsula restaurant Audrey's was retired and is now Ember, where chef Jake Furst is cooking dry-aged steaks and Australian seafood over open flame and charcoal. "Audrey's set the benchmark for coastal dining, and Ember builds on that legacy with a fresh, fire-led approach that champions Mornington Peninsula's growers and producers," says Furst. New wine bar CeeCee's has also taken over the atrium, harking back to the original Conti Club.



Clockwise from top left: Meltemi Mediterranean's Sour; Anvers chef Connor Bishop finishes his signature ox tongue dish on the hibachi; oysters at Tigerfish. Opposite, clockwise from top: Isle of Skye scallop at Bonheur by Matt Abé; the interiors at Rätä.



SOUTH AUSTRALIA

ANVERS

The Adelaide Hills boutique winery has welcomed Connor Bishop (Hardy's Verandah, Maxwell's, The Kitchen at Bec Hardy) as executive chef of its striking restaurant, Anvers. Committed to championing local flavour, Bishop is sourcing dairy from Fleurieu Milk Company, beef from the local Kangarilla area, hapuka caught off Port Lincoln, and Spring Ridge venison. Standout dishes include hibachi-grilled ox tongue with ginger apples and sesame; wild-caught venison with asparagus and shiraz jus; and a dainty dessert of lemon myrtle, strawberry and rose. "My core ethos is restraint, clarity and respect for the ingredient," he says. "If a dish tastes like it grew here, balanced and purposeful then I've done it right."

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

TIGERFISH

Perth's Marine Parade is now home to a stylish Southeast Asian bar and restaurant on the ground floor of the beloved, 120-year-old Cottesloe Beach Hotel. With ocean views, Tigerfish has an outdoor terrace, booth seating, a curved cocktail bar and comfortable lounge, with colourful striped details, terrazzo flooring and natural textiles adding to the beachy vibe. Packing bright flavours and plenty of seafood, the menu lists prawn toast-style spring rolls with nuoc cham; banana leaf-wrapped and roasted market fish with green curry and Asian herbs; and a signature triple-cooked duck with fragrant soy. Cocktails keep things light and bright, with a saké and pickled

ginger-tinged Martini and a monthly Highball special, plus a dedicated snacks menu for bar walk-ins.

PEARLA & CO.

Local chef Scott Bridger (Bib & Tucker) has opened a coastal restaurant to connect diners with the producers who contribute to every step of their food's journey. At Pearla & Co, local seafood is treated reverently with dry-ageing on site and a dedicated oyster and chilled seafood bar. This is accompanied by native ingredients and local produce from growers Bridger has come to know personally. With a dining room featuring a 10-metre-long marble bar, recycled jarrah floors and an alfresco terrace for catching the salty breeze, it's a celebration of Perth's unique style of relaxed dining.

QUEENSLAND

MELTEMI MEDITERRANIA

The owners of the Gold Coast's popular Xenia Grill have expanded to Broadbeach. Integrating traditions from Spain, Morocco, Sardinia, Lebanon, Türkiye and Greece, the menu at Meltemi Mediterranean stars a raw seafood selection, mezze, and beachy mains like yellowbelly flounder filled with tomato, capers, saffron and green olive salsa. A slow-turning grill section offers Lebanese chicken with tahini labne, Turkish wagyu skewers with kisir tabbouleh, and roasted lamb. Wines cover key Mediterranean regions, while signature cocktails use rosemary, ouzo, baklava syrup and pomegranate. With olive trees in the outdoor dining area, it's a sun-kissed spot for holiday dining.

INTERNATIONAL

LONDON, UK

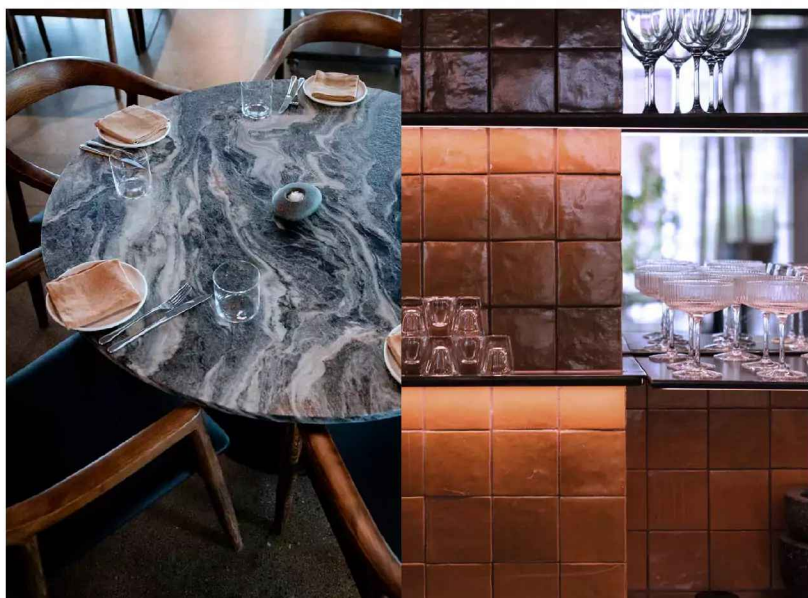
BONHEUR BY MATT ABÉ

High-flying Australian Matt Abé has opened his first restaurant at the former site of Le Gavroche in Mayfair. The Sydney-born chef (who started his culinary career at Aria and was most recently chef patron at Restaurant Gordon Ramsay) is sharing menus that nod to his roots. Carefully detailed dishes include Isle of Skye scallop with carrot, clementine and yuzu kosho; 125-day dry-aged English sirloin with potato terrine, smoked marrow and sauce Bordelaise; and a signature dessert with layers of pecan, coffee and vanilla parfait with cocoa nib ice cream and Pedro Ximénez gel. As well as an up-close chef's table experience for six, the venue integrates a semi-circular bar and underground dining room adorned with works by London-based artist Rajan Seth and warm, textural details like leather, velvet and horsehair wallpaper.

QUEENSTOWN, NZ

RĀTĀ

Noted New Zealand restaurateur Fleur Caulton has refreshed and relaunched her popular restaurant after 14 years as a favourite stop in the region. A renewed focus on "warm hospitality" sees the menu pared back but embracing bolder flavours shaped by fire, fermentation and seasonal availability of local produce. Taking inspiration from the landscapes of the South Island, the new menu offers highlights like ocean-speared snapper crudo with Cloudy Bay clam, asparagus and seaweed, and Canter Valley duck with wild blueberry, rhubarb and pine.





CAFE CULTURE

UPDATES FOR THE EARLY BIRDS



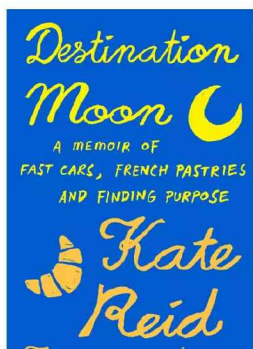
Clockwise from left: Café Margaret's bacon, cheese and egg roll with chipotle mayonnaise and spring onions; Butter Days Bakery's v Demetrios and Martina Cissig Demetrios; and the signature sunshine bun.

WAKE UP WITH MARGARET

After switching short-lived Chinese restaurant Song Bird to Italian Gran Torino in August, Neil Perry has pulled off another Sydney pivot, turning popular venue Next Door into Café Margaret. The neighbouring venue to his standout Double Bay restaurant Margaret now serves around the clock, commencing with a breakfast menu that includes a bacon, cheese and egg roll with chipotle mayonnaise and spring onions; house-made scones with jam and cream; and a Reuben-style sandwich with salt beef (David Blackmore Wagyu, naturally) and Swiss cheese. The health-conscious can look to a classic Bircher muesli or a bowl of spinach, potato, corn and pickled vegetables topped with a boiled egg and miso and honey dressing. From lunchtime the much-talked-about Next Door cheeseburger remains, along with small plates, salads and bistro classics.

JUST ADD BUTTER

Melbourne has a new sweet treat worth queuing for at Butter Days Bakery. Owned by John Demetrios (Vue de Monde, Omnia, Yugen), who took out season two of *MasterChef: Dessert Masters*, and his wife Martina Cissig Demetrios (Embla, Trader House), the Malvern bakery's signature is the sunshine bun: a savoury-sweet malted dough filled with lemon and cinnamon-scented custard. Swedish kanelbulle, profiteroles, and brown butter sablés Bretons with fruit custard feature among the sweet offerings. Those who prefer savoury can go for Danishes with everything bagel seasoning, cream cheese, dill, capers, shallots and lemon topped with smoked salmon, or cheesy pinwheels.



Known for her precision and commitment to pastry innovation, Lune Croissanterie founder Kate Reid's new memoir *Destination Moon* (Simon & Schuster, \$50) explores how she went from aerospace engineering to international pastry acclaim – and the hurdles she's overcome.



MEET THE MAKER

Jess Coulson

This month we catch up with the co-owner of Ruffle Farm, which grows and supplies gourmet mushrooms in Sydney's inner west.

WORDS ALICE WASLEY

How did you get into farming? My husband Joel and I had pretty standard jobs; he was an engineer and I worked in retail. We were both super sick of it, and in 2020 we quit, moved to Europe, and did a bunch of farm work. But we really missed our friends and Sydney. We asked ourselves: How can we be connected to the earth and close to our friends, music, culture and food?

And you arrived at mushrooms as the answer?

We'd been growing mushrooms as a hobby for eating at home, and realised it's such a small space requirement that we could scale it up and farm in the city. We moved back from Europe and just went for it.

Two years later, you supply some of the hottest restaurants in Sydney – Ester, Bar Copains, Corner 75. How did that happen so quickly?

Being in the inner west, we can harvest the mushrooms and have them on the plate in an hour, which is insane. The convenience for chefs is so handy. The only con is that it's a 24/7 job. We can't really go away because we harvest every day; produce doesn't take a day off.

When you spot your mushrooms on a menu,

do you order them? Oh, always. It's a good excuse to eat out every week, and call it market research. The eggplant dish at Ester, which uses our chestnut mushrooms, is ridiculous. They're so talented. I don't understand how they do what they do.

And at home, how do you like to prepare them?

Now that it's warming up, I really like golden oyster mushrooms, lemon, parsley and pasta. Really simple. Citrusy. Takes 10 minutes to cook.

Did the mushroom killer trial have much of an impact on business? That was when we were still doing markets. It was a good talking point, kind of, but it definitely scared a lot of people away. They'd say, "Should I give this to my in-laws?" or "How do you know they're not poisonous?" I could nerd out and explain that you can't grow a death cap mushroom in captivity, and if you did, it would be a scientific breakthrough.

Which of your varieties would you rather focus on?

Golden enokis. They're so good, with a really punchy, almost crustaceany flavour. We try to grow as many weird and unusual things as we can.

At the moment, we're working on making our own spawn, which a lot of farms don't do.

What's else is on the Ruffle Farm radar? We're at maximum capacity in our current space, so we're building more rooms, and custom equipment. That's been cool, leaning on Joel's engineering background. We're trying to speed up the process because it's still just the two of us, so we have to be pretty creative.

rufflefarm.com.au

FOUR OF A KIND

Seafood sauces

Because even the ocean's bounty performs better with a sidekick.

Al Brown Turf 'n' Surf All Purpose Sauce

A bit of a cult favourite condiment (especially among New Zealanders), Al Brown packs a punch thanks to flecks of dill pickles. \$12 for 270gm, reallygoodpeople.com.au

Birch & Waite Parsley, Dill & Tarragon Seafood Sauce

For a herbaceous kick to accompany fish and chips or a summer seafood barbecue spread, this free-range egg mayonnaise-based seafood sauce is an upgraded pantry staple. \$6 for 250ml, harrisfarm.com.au

Victor Churchill Cocktail Sauce

It's hard to beat a classic – and Victor Churchill knows classics. Balancing richness and tanginess, this cocktail sauce pairs perfectly with chilled prawns, crab sandwiches or fried morsels. \$19 for 200gm, victorchurchill.com

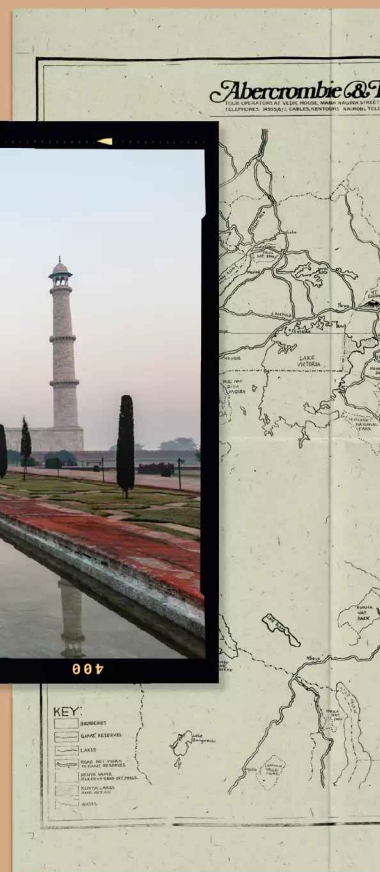
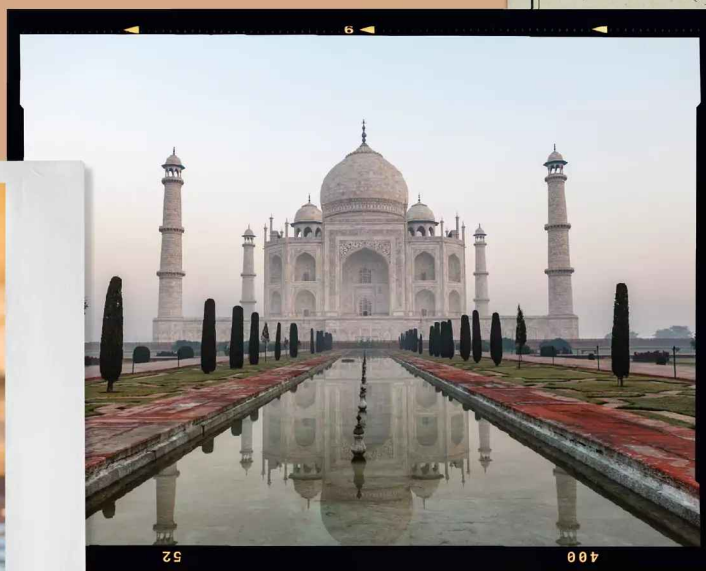
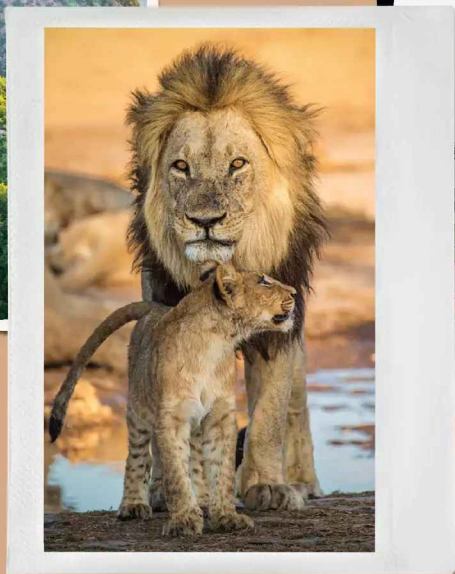
Umei Yuzu Mayo

Melbourne-made Umei mayonnaises are plant-based and flavoured-packed. This yuzu version brings the unmistakable fragrance and zest of real yuzu juice in a lush, balanced mayonnaise to dip or drizzle. \$10 for 180ml, umeifoods.com.au



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Review

LAUNCHING OUR NEW RESTAURANT OF THE MONTH SPOT, WE DINE AT DAPHNE IN MELBOURNE, WHERE SIMPLICITY SINGS.



Restaurateur Hannah Green's latest venture, Daphne, opened its doors in November. "I wanted to create a space that was casual enough that you could pop in for a quick drink and snack, and beautiful enough to entice you to stay for the full kit and caboodle," Green tells *Gourmet Traveller*, of the Brunswick East space. "Somewhere fun, chill and welcoming, with good music and great vibes."





Daphne

Review by **MICHAEL HARDEN.**

IT DOESN'T COME AS A SURPRISE THAT Hannah Green's latest project has such an impressive sense of calm confidence. Green is, after all, a lauded hospo veteran who, with her first standalone project, Etta, added skilled restaurateur to her front of house and sommelier renown.

Still, with Daphne, just a few doors from Etta in the former Bar Romantica space, Green has opened strong, starting with a renovation by If Architecture that cleverly divides the sizeable space with booth seating, deep red curtains and a lengthy counter that fronts both bar and kitchen. It has a bustling, "casual neighbourhood local" vibe, echoed by a menu that puts an elevated but user-friendly spin on perennial crowd-pleasers from roast chicken to house wine.

On tap and coming in pinot grigio or sangiovese form, that house wine is a collaboration with Victorian winemaker Dom Valentine, served by the glass or carafe, and

The bustling, "casual neighbourhood local" vibe is echoed by a menu that puts an elevated spin on crowd-pleasers.

Clockwise from top left: Daphne's booth seating; a selection of Martinis from Daphne's Martini Club; and signage at the entrance. Opposite, from left: grilled mortadella skewers; and the private dining room. PREVIOUS PAGES Left: Daphne's kitchen. Right: mussels escabeche, whipped cod and flatbread.



52 Lygon St,
Brunswick East,
VICTORIA

CHEF
Diana Desensi

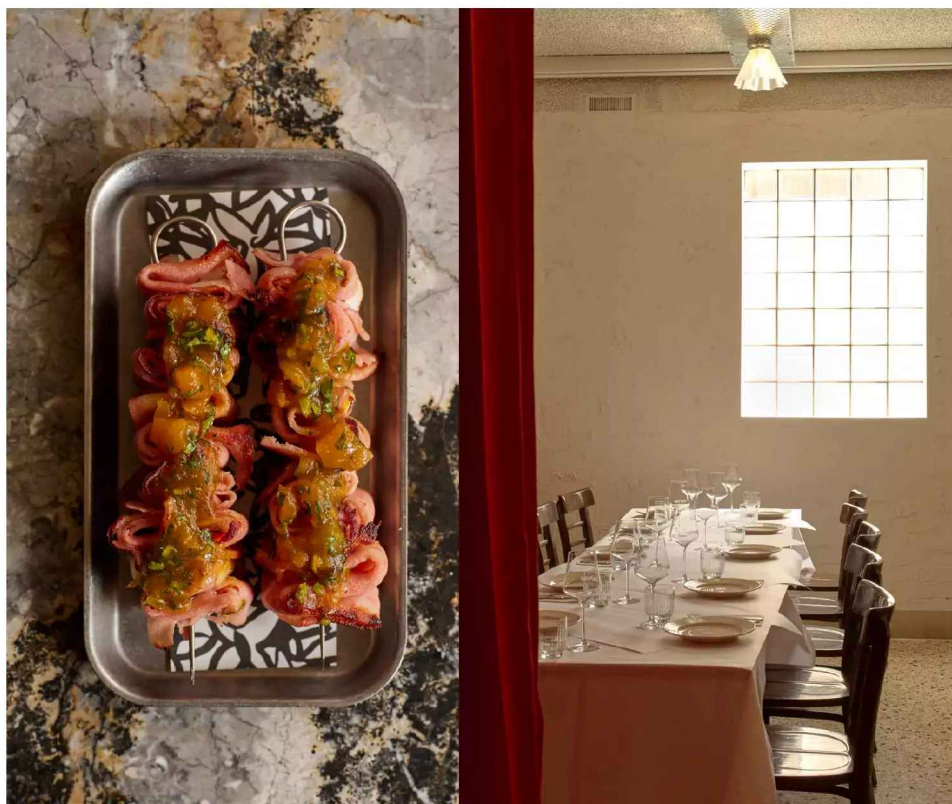
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PRICE GUIDE
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BOOKINGS
Recommended



PHOTOGRAPHY SHELLEY HORAN.



topping out at \$50 for 750ml. The quality for the price is remarkable (something that's also true of the bottle list) and sets the tone for the refined simplicity and generosity of the no-bad-choices menu from chef Diana Desensi (Montalto, Pt Leo Estate, Saint George).

The snack section includes wood-fired oysters Kilpatrick with powerful tomato, fermented chilli and smoke elements added to the traditional Worcestershire and bacon, while the excellent wood-grilled mortadella skewers are early contenders for cult status, their ribboned meat teamed with mustard fruit given a splash of white balsamic vinegar.

Desensi has a talent for simple twists on classics, like pairing grilled asparagus spears with a classic tonnato sauce made of albacore offcuts from Etta, a lovely combination that reads both rich and clean. It's also there with Bloody Mary heirloom tomatoes, the rustically cut

chunks of multi-coloured fruit tossed with Spanish olives, fermented chilli, kombu and house dried oregano, a combination that enthusiastically and satisfyingly dashes across the palate.

There's also a burger on the menu and it's a good one. The wagyu brisket patty is brushed with bone marrow and comes with a tangy pickle-forward "tuck shop sauce", a bun from local bakery Wildlife, and excellent fries of textbook crispness and seasoning. The half roast chicken is also worthy of attention, brined, dunked in herbed butter and cooked in both combi and wood ovens before being served with pan juices and white balsamic sauce and blistered grapes. Yes please.

Don't miss the olive oil cake, moist and citrusy and served with cream and berries. It's homely enough to bring a tear to the eye and is a fine example of what Daphne does best: nurturing and comforting with maximum skill and minimal fuss. ●

ALSO TAKING BOOKINGS...

For reviews of the latest openings, including these gems, head to gourmettraveller.com.au

Vin-Cenzo's

DARLINGHURST, NSW

This newly opened Italian is a hot ticket in Sydney, from the team behind the wildly popular Bar Copains and Bessie's. "Vin-Cenzo's is no museum piece, but it does offer a little bit of comforting time travel back to a more carefree age," writes Alexandra Carlton.

The Woodshed

KIN KIN, QLD

Tucked behind the Kin Kin Hotel, this fine-diner is putting the Noosa hinterland on the gastronomic map. "Head chef Oscar Holgado trained in Michelin-starred kitchens in London," writes Elliot Baker, who says the standout dish is the red claw yabby.

Lontara

ROTTNEST IS, WA

A new menu was unveiled in September, ready for the summer season. "Polished Asian cooking in a breezy setting equals an island restaurant worth setting sail for," writes Max Veenhuizen.

Drinks

WORDS LANA TELFORD

TOP DROPS, NEW OPENINGS, AND
INSIDE TIPS FROM THE EXPERTS



The world's most popular spirit, baijiu, is making noise on Aussie shores. Long poured across China as a gesture of hospitality, this punchy grain liquor is crafted through a centuries-old process of solid-state fermentation, yielding flavours that swing from fragrant and fruity to bold and deeply savoury. Now, it's capturing local curiosity. At Sydney's Bar See See, you can enjoy the Blooming Wisdom (above); a clarified soy cocktail made with Moutai Chun 1992, an aromatic baijiu. Meanwhile, at Melbourne's brand new Chinese-inspired cocktail bar Moondrop, the M.S. Gibson brings a dry blend of baijiu, gin and Sherry. Cheers!

PHOTOGRAPHY ANNA KUCERA

Heaps Normal brings bitter citrus and fresh thyme to its non-alcoholic line-up with Fling, a limited-edition Orange Sour. But what's with the "less than 0.5 per cent ABV" label? That's just the trace amount of alcohol that occurs during the natural fermentation process. "Many everyday foods such as ripe bananas and some burger buns contain a similar amount of alcohol," point out the Heaps Normal boffins. \$75 for 24 x 375ml cans, heapsnormal.com



AND CHILL

Far from your typical wine cooler, Studio Henry Wilson's Champagne Bucket would be perfectly at home in an art gallery. Solid aluminium, its weighty, minimalist structure reflects the designer's signature utilitarian approach. Built to last, it can hold four bottles, bringing finesse to any celebration. \$1200, studiohenrywilson.com



PROFILE

Ralph Libo-on, Kiwi-Filipino bar owner of Melbourne's Inuman, talks craft and bar culture.



COOL CHARM

This sleek retro-style compact mini fridge is perfect for keeping drinks chilled and ready to mix for summer cocktails. Smeg 34-litre 50s style Retro Fridge in Silver, \$1790, harveynorman.com.au

You run a couple of restaurants.

What drew you to open a bar?

Drinks are fun! No, but really, there's something more relaxing about walking into a bar rather than a restaurant. Watching my guests take the first sip of something I've created – nothing beats that feeling.

On the flipside, what's hard about running a bar? Incorporating good quality ingredients while keeping it affordable for my guests. Alcohol gets more ridiculously expensive every year, so it's a challenge to use just enough without ruining the integrity of the cocktail.

For those new to Filipino flavours, what should they try at Inuman?

Either the Kuya Archie or the Whisky Sour. Both use calamansi, the national citrus of the Philippines.

What other bars are you into?

The Rocket Society in Brunswick East serves yummy ethical local wine, delicious Lebanese snacks and fun banter. And Myrtle Wine Bar in the CBD, which has a spectacular wine list and some delicious eats.

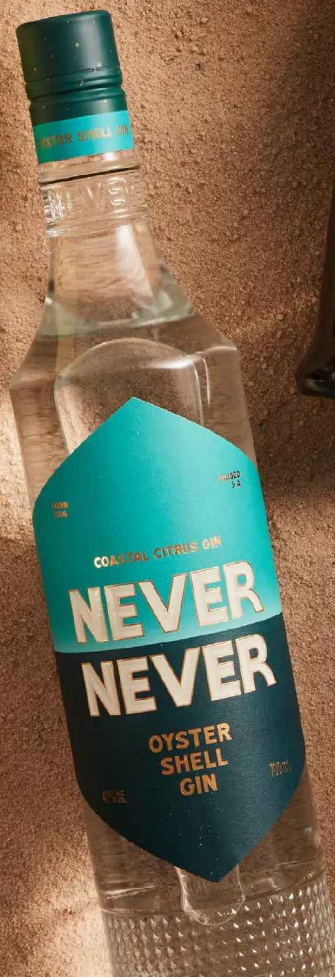
This summer, what are you drinking?

I love a good wine spritzer. My go-to is a bit of skinsy orange wine topped up with tonic. Perfect for a hot day.

What can we expect next from Inuman? We'll be doing more live music events that are really popular, and hopefully a takeover in Manila.

And what would be your dream project? To collaborate on a film would be really cool. Something like James Bond with that damn Vesper Martini.

inumanmelbourne.com



Coastal pairings

Wary of matching your seafood with anything other than white wine? Step right this way, writes **SAMANTHA PAYNE**.

FEW THINGS DEFINE AN AUSTRALIAN SUMMER quite like seafood, and whether you're enjoying prawns hot off the barbecue, oysters straight from the shell or grilled octopus by the beach, the right drink can lift even the simplest dish.

"The seafood industry in Australia is so diverse, from tropical to subantarctic, offering options to suit anyone's tastes and skills," says former sommelier Rosie Love, who founded Tether Agency, specialising in seafood and wine. But while many of us automatically reach for sparkling or white wine, Love points out that this wide spectrum of flavour and texture invites a broader view of pairing.

Houston Barakat, wine director at Sydney's Saint Peter, suggests starting with just a small step away from the default. "Dry sparkling rosé, generally speaking, will go with more seafood dishes than it doesn't," he says. "It has the brightness to cut through the oil and salt of fried fish and chips or prawn crackers. It has the flavour intensity to stand up to a bouillabaisse, or a red curry with salmon, or even a lightly curried fish pie."

Tasmania's Bellebonne Bis Rosé from Pipers River is an all-time favourite of his. "I've enjoyed it at BYO sushi train with yellowfin tuna hand rolls, with cured salmon and crème fraîche on toast at brunch, and we've served it at Saint Peter with Ooray plum and quandong sorbets. Any wine that can serve me well from oysters to dessert is always welcome at the table."

Once you've mastered that move, there's room to go further, and Love recommends embracing salt. "There's nothing better than a dirty, briny Martini balanced with a creamy Sydney rock oyster," she says. Instead of an unexciting sauvignon blanc, she suggests a vermentino alongside some Spencer Gulf prawns, or a classic prawn and iceberg sandwich with a crisp riesling. The common thread? Freshness, texture and minerality that echo the sea itself.

Barakat, too, enjoys pushing the boundaries with seafood pairings. "John Dory liver pâté and Saison sweet vermouth," he offers. "Certifiably niche, but really, really good." And what about a fish burger? "An icy cold beer, or a light, bright, slightly chilled glass of COS Frappato from Sicily."

FIVE TO BUY

Kitajima Sea Salt Yuzushu, Shiga Prefecture, Japan, \$60 for 720ml

Established in 1805, Kitajima has been crafting sake for more than 200 years. This Sea Salt Yuzushu combines local sake with four times the usual yuzu and a hint of sea salt. Bright yellow grapefruit and lemon curd aromas lead to a smooth, opulent mouthfeel with candied and salted lemon peel on the finish. Best served chilled with a ponzu-dressed kingfish ceviche or smoky grilled octopus.
kentstreetcellars.com.au

Never Never Oyster Shell Gin, Adelaide Hills, SA, \$86 for 700ml

Evoking Australia's coastline, this gin infuses Kangaroo Island oyster shells with lime leaf, waxflower, Tasmanian wakame and native coastal herbs such as saltbush. Fresh sea spray bursts from the glass alongside salted citrus and a slight herbaceous edge, leading to a long, savoury finish. Perfect for dry Martinis, paired with oysters.
neverneverdistilling.com.au

2017 Marco de Bartoli Vigna La Miccia Marsala Riserva, Sicily, Italy, \$115 for 500ml
This Marsala combines modern winemaking with

traditional ageing, with aromas of brown sugar, candied apricots and caramelised orange peel. The palate unfolds with stone fruits, walnuts and a hint of tropical mango and papaya. Serve alongside seared scallops and fennel for a savoury contrast to its gentle sweetness.
thewineemporium.com.au

2024 Vino Volta Sole Bambino Vermentino, Swan Valley, WA, \$32

This riper, fuller vermentino shows custard apple and lemon balm on the nose. The palate is rich yet precise, with dry, savoury notes and a hint of lemon meringue-like complexity. Perfect for a crumbed whiting sandwich with shredded iceberg and mayo on a hot summer's day.
vinovolta.com.au

NV Bellebonne Bis Rosé, Pipers River, Tas, \$40

Made in the méthode traditionnelle by Australia's "rosé queen" Natalie Fryar, this pale rosé spends up to two years on lees for added depth. Aromas of toasted brioche and redcurrants lead to a palate of strawberries and cream, cranberries, rhubarb stalks and rose petals. Match with crab cakes or salmon with a mustard dill sauce.
differentdrop.com



COCKTAIL HOUR

Peggy Paloma

Pretty in pink with a kick of tequila, this makes for a refreshing sundowner after a day at the beach.

IF THE BIRTH OF THE MARGARITA AND THE shortage of European spirits after World War II popularised tequila beyond its homeland, the Paloma also played a key role. Its combination of warm, earthy agave tones and a sharp grapefruit backbone made the drinking world sit up and take notice of this once niche spirit.

How grapefruit and tequila found one another is up for debate. One rumour suggests the arrival of a popular grapefruit soda in Mexico was the catalyst; another points towards it being a creation of legendary bartender Don Javier Delgado Corona – though he apparently denied it all. Whatever happened, it became Mexico's preferred way to drink tequila.

Swaying pandanus trees and ocean glimpses are part of the experience at Paper Daisy, Cabarita Beach, where you can order a Peggy Paloma, a riff on the original with subtle Asian complexities. "Kaffir lime adds an aromatic note and a perfumed citrus, watermelon brings freshness and kumquat adds gentle sweetness," says restaurant manager, Vincent Valliere.

Intriguingly, this reimagining also includes a shot of dry Sherry. "Tio Pepe adds dryness and a savoury character, creating a more layered and complex Paloma while still honouring its crisp, tequila-forward essence."

MAKE IT YOURSELF

Combine 40ml El Tequileno Blanco, 10ml Fair kumquat liqueur, 5ml Tio Pepe, 20ml fresh grapefruit juice, 20ml fresh lime juice, 10ml agave nectar, two drops orange bitters, and three broken kaffir lime leaves in a cocktail shaker. Fill with ice and shake until chilled, then fine-strain into a highball with a black salt rim and filled with ice cubes. Garnish with two small watermelon slices.

THREE TO TRY

Blanco Tequilas



El Tequileno Blanco
Highland agave meets a touch of sweet piloncillo in this vibrant mixto. Herbaceous and lively, it's a playful sip that balances citrus brightness with subtle vanilla undertones.
\$82 for 750ml
nicks.com.au



Solento Organic Blanco
From a single organic estate in Amatitán, this blanco is pure, clean and silky. Slow-roasted agave shines with gentle citrus, soft herbal notes, and a refreshing, effortless finish.
\$118 for 750ml
danmurphys.com.au



Tequila Ocho Plata
A bold yet refined, single-estate highland blanco carrying the soul of traditional brick ovens. Fresh agave, zesty citrus, and a hint of pepper deliver unmistakable mineral clarity.
\$115 for 750ml
jimscellars.com.au

WORDS ALEX MITCHESON.



THE SEASON WHERE NATURE REVEALS ITS *W*ONDERS

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Seasonal menu

At Palate restaurant, the seasonal winter menu celebrates Tasmania's finest produce which may include winter truffles, oyster mushrooms, root vegetables and our finest selection of local shellfish including mussels, oysters and abalone, depending on supply. Menus are paired with sommelier recommended local wines.



Waverley Mills - gift selection

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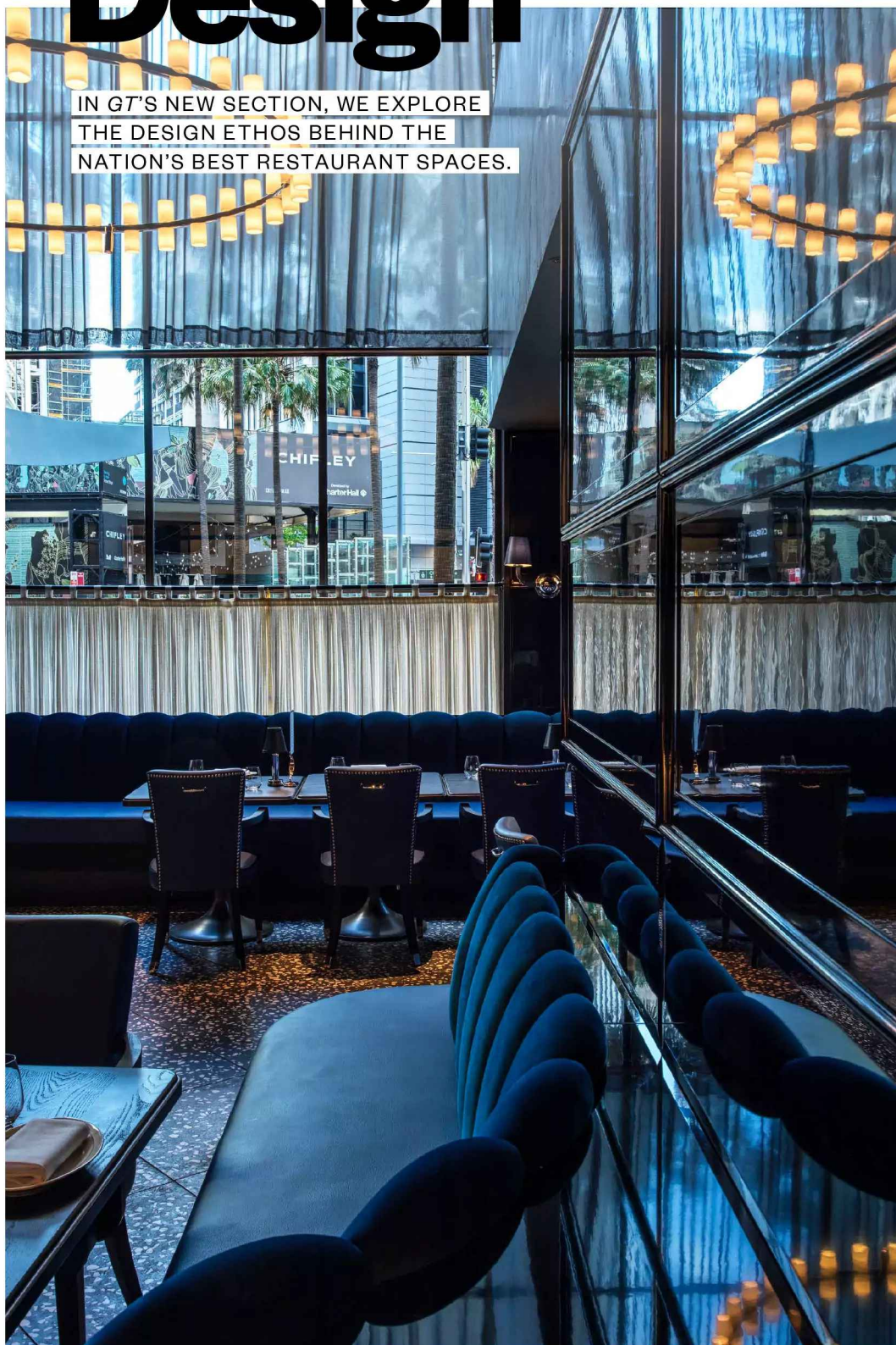
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PHOTOGRAPHY JASON LOUCAS

Brand Americano

Melbourne's glamorous steakhouse brings its elevated style to Sydney, writes **MICHAEL HARRY**.

CHRIS LUCAS HAS SEEN PLENTY OF RESTAURANT trends over his 30 years in the game, but one of his greatest learnings is the power of branding. His latest venture brings hit Melbourne steakhouse Grill Americano to Sydney, retaining all the graphic, glamorous features that made it an Instagrammable smash down south, from the black terrazzo floor to the cobalt blue velvet banquettes.

"Doing Chin Chin 15 years ago, we didn't think that way – a lot of things happened by accident," Lucas says. "Now we're more sophisticated in our approach and think very deeply about the cornerstone design elements of every restaurant."

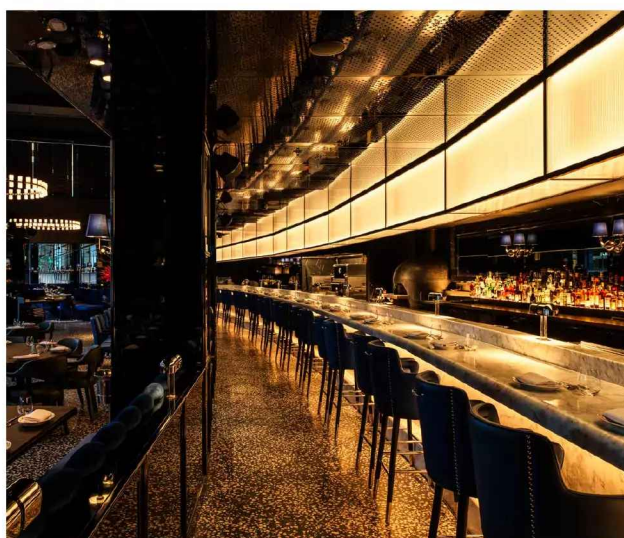
The original Melbourne Grill opened in 2022 amid Covid lockdowns and earned fans for its tableside tiramisù and grown-up aesthetic. "Of all the restaurants I've done," says Lucas, "it's had the most identifiable design palette – it has really captured the imagination. People walk in and say, 'Wow!'"

The brief? To capture the energy of a New York-Italian grill infused with Venetian style, including custom chandeliers, polished black joinery and hand-built silver-studded chairs. In the words of Lucas, it's "urban, brutalist, masculine, sexy, brooding. It's a bit like stepping onto a film set. Don Corleone from *The Godfather* might be just around the corner."

Interior designer Samantha Eades oversaw the transformation. "Chris is all about legacy and building institutions, so the philosophy was to design once, and design well," says Eades, principal at Mitchell & Eades and designer of Lucas hotspots such as Maison Bâtard and Carlotta. "He spends a lot on fitouts because he wants them to stand the test of time."

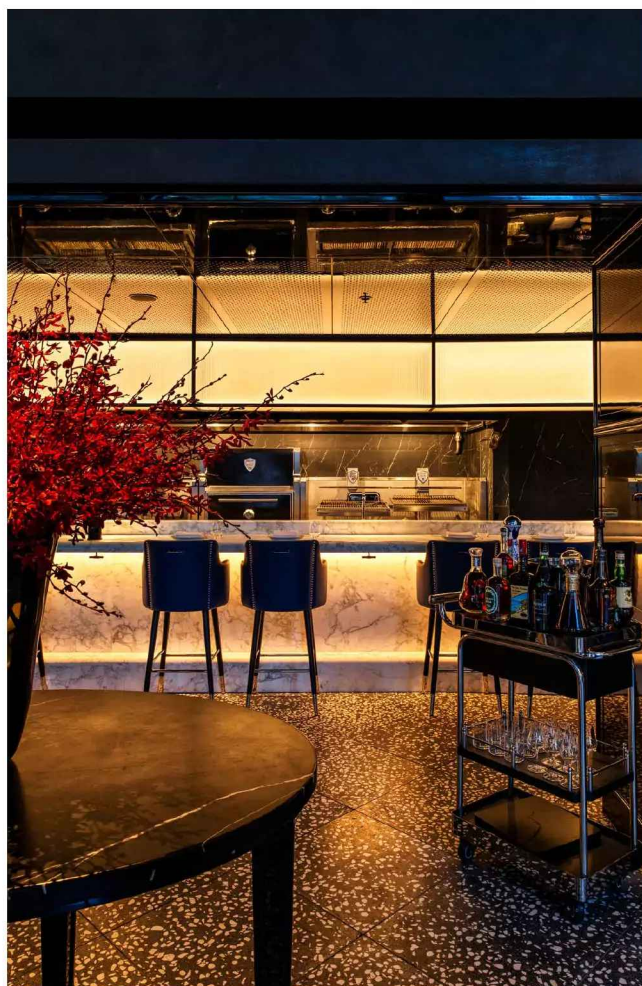
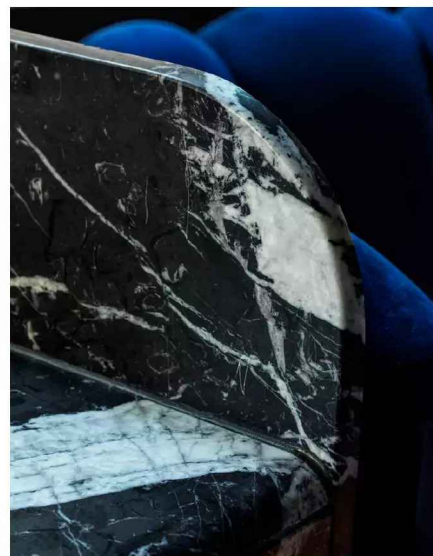
The Sydney venue has a far bigger footprint – approximately 1000 square metres versus Melbourne's 300 – with six-metre ceilings and an 11-metre feature wall. The sweeping curve of the 30-metre Carrara carved marble bar, meanwhile, mirrors the wave of the exterior. "It was very hard to build, but we had an amazing stonemason," Lucas says. "It's probably the most beautiful bar I've ever built."

The 130-seat power dining spot brings new life to the ground floor of the heritage-listed 1957 modernist tower formerly known as Qantas House. "It was designed to be like a wave covering the corner of



From top: Grill Americano Sydney's entrance; and curved marble bar. Opposite: the dining room's luxurious velvet banquettes, black terrazzo floors and custom chandeliers are part of the design brief.

Clockwise from right: Grill Americano's signature silver-studded leather dining chairs; Carrara marble curves; and its expansive open kitchen, with a bar cart and floral centrepiece in the dining room.



Chifley Square and Hunter Street, and it's an iconic building in Sydney," says Lucas.

The venue was meticulously restored over a three-year planning and construction phase. "I love the challenge of a heritage building, and the end result sits beautifully in the space," says Eades. "To me, you walk in and it feels like it belongs here."

She admits it's an oddly shaped space, full of arcs rather than straight lines, which were a challenge. "It's a large venue, but playing with volume and ceiling heights makes it feel intimate."

The menu is bigger too. The kitchen is more than double the size of its counterpart, leading to an expanded hand-made pasta section, a seafood-focused wet bar, and a boosted pastry program offering new desserts alongside that tiramisù. Eades designs for functionality first, giving equal weight to all areas of the restaurant. "When back of house runs smoothly, front of house is a seamless guest experience. For us it's all about the minutiae – table heights, banquette depths, acoustics – and then we make it look good."

Part of Grill's success, Eades says, is that while it looks like a fancy destination, the food remains approachable. "You're not getting emulsions and dégustations – you're getting food that works for multiple experiences. You can drop in after the theatre for dessert and wine, or come for oysters and Champagne, or a birthday, a date, a business lunch."

Will the Sydney spot match its southern sibling's success? Early signs are promising, says Lucas, though nothing is guaranteed. "You never know what people's reactions are going to be. If you've opened more than one restaurant, you're constantly learning from your mistakes. I never feel like I get it quite right."

His quest for perfection is a win for Sydney – and who knows? Brand Americano may continue to expand, one city at a time. ●



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Object of Desire

What Team GT is coveting this month.

The Louis Vuitton Camera Box is a modern, hard-sided handbag that was first introduced by artistic director Nicolas Ghesquière in 2022 as part of the brand's autumn/winter collection. While the shape, which is inspired by a Louis Vuitton trunk, might look like a vintage camera bag it's actually a contemporary fashion item and has become one of the brand's design icons. It's available in several colours and materials including a collaboration with artist Takashi Murakami. Pictured is the classic monogram canvas edition with golden finish hardware and leather lining. It has a removable and adjustable strap and is spacious enough to fit items like a phone and wallet – or a small camera. \$14,700, au.louisvuitton.com

EX NIHILO



SPIKY MUSE
eau de parfum

FROM THE ARCHIVES

1984

As GT celebrates its 60th anniversary in 2026, we take a look at some of the magazine's most iconic past issues.



WORDS DAVID MEAGHER. PHOTOGRAPHY IMOGENE WALSH.



The tailgate picnic

County Fare
Scotch Eggs
Cold Chicken Pie
Green Salad
Pickled Walnuts, Cucumber and Cauliflower
Granary Bread
Strawberries and Mulberries with Cream
English Cheeses served with Water Biscuits
Selection of British Ales and Ciders



More Aussellans are now buying the four-door Range Rover than any conventional car in its price range. Well-equipped and superbly comfortable on and off the road, the Range Rover appeals to the connoisseur who appreciates "the king of four-wheel drives".

AUSTRALIAN GOURMET 87

IN 1984 I READ GEORGE ORWELL'S NOVEL of the same name. I remember very little about it except for an early line in the book which is a description of a building's hallway and that it "smelt of boiled cabbage and old rag mats". It was such a foreign simile to me because I had never smelt cabbage at that point in my life boiled, fresh or otherwise.

No disrespect to the team on *Gourmet Traveller* in 1984, but I suspect that if I worked here then I would be very familiar with the smell of that vegetable. Cuisine in Australia was quite different in the 1980s to what we think of today as fine food. We've definitely come a long way.

GT in the 1980s had a regular feature each month teaching readers how to cook with their new-fangled microwave ovens, it introduced them to wonderful "new" herbs like basil, and strange dishes such as sushi. It also attempted to define the concept of New Australian Cuisine (which, if I had to summarise, was basically French). Meanwhile, based on the advertising, it seems we were a nation of chain-smokers and whisky drinkers. Good times. ●



Clockwise from above: The tailgate picnic; and Art of the salad, both from the February/March 1984 issue. Opposite: the cover of *Australian Gourmet* April/May 1984 issue featuring a Hungarian Dobostorte.



ON THE RADAR

It's time to get excited about 2026, which is set to be packed with breathtaking new hotels in beloved destinations, thrilling voyages from luxury brands, and an exciting new era for members clubs.

WORDS **GEORGIA CONDON**



Clockwise from above: a Grand Suite on board the *Venice Simplon-Orient-Express*, a Belmond train; and the elegant Art Deco interiors aboard.



WHAT'S ON IN 2026

Sydney Fish Market

One of Sydney's most anticipated reveals in recent years, the new Sydney Fish Market officially opens on 19 January. It features a massive harbourside retail floor, world-class auction and wholesale facilities, classes at the Sydney Seafood School, and more than 40 restaurants and dining options from top names including Somer Sivrioğlu, Luke Nguyen and Toshihiko Oe. The new site is expected to attract more than six million visitors annually, and retains the spirit of the former fish market with a stunning, eco-conscious design on Blackwattle Bay.

Melbourne Food & Wine Festival

This year's MFWF line-up includes 170 events in Melbourne and 26 in regional areas, including a Greek take on the ever-popular World's Longest Lunch. Global sensation Cake Picnic will bring a sweet affair, while international venues including Le Doyenné and New York's Bridges come to town. The festival runs from 20 to 29 March.

Tasting Australia

Adelaide's annual celebration of South Australian food and drink culture is back between 8 and 17 May, with bold experiences from a new creative team including Africola's Duncan Welgemoed.



Clockwise from left: Sydney Fish Market; oysters at The Lands by Capella; Cake Picnic at Melbourne Food & Wine Festival; Cartier exhibition at the National Gallery of Victoria. Opposite, clockwise from top: the historic cloister at Villa San Michele in Florence; The Bonobo by Raes in Byron Bay.

The Lands by Capella

In February, the heritage-listed Department of Lands in the Sydney CBD will be unveiled as a new destination events venue. Adjacent to the Capella hotel, the five event spaces (including a ballroom) will be joined by restaurants, bars, experiential retail and modern members club The Sandstones Club by Florence Guild, all due to open in 2026.

Venice Simplon-Orient-Express

The luxury rail experience launches a new journey between Paris and the Amalfi Coast in May, stopping in Pompeii on the way. Following the French and Italian Rivas, the three-night trip includes a stay at Belmond's Caruso hotel in Ravello, with optional boat tours and cooking classes.

Noosa Food & Wine Festival

Long lunches, sunset sessions and cocktail cruises of the Noosa River are on the cards for the return of the Sunshine Coast's favourite event between 11 and 14 June. The Festival Village will offer wine tastings, canapés and cooking demonstrations from top chefs.

Saint Haven

Melbourne-based private members club and wellness destination Saint Haven will begin conquering New South Wales with its largest site opening in North Sydney soon. Joining a wholefoods restaurant, there'll be a rest, recovery and performance zone with high-tech tools like cryotherapy; a co-working floor; a bathhouse with magnesium pools and saunas; and a gym and Pilates studio. A second site in Bondi remains in progress for Sydney, due to launch in spring.

Cartier

Melbourne's winter is set to sparkle with a landmark exhibition at the NGV featuring more than 300 dazzling pieces of jewellery and art from the luxury maison, including the iconic panther brooch, on show between 12 June and 4 October.

Noojee & Neerim Truffle Festival

Gippsland is welcoming a three-week celebration of the region's premium cool-climate produce, including French black truffles, from 11 July. On-farm truffle hunts, chef-hosted dinners and masterclasses are in the mix, as well as artisan regional markets.

Amazon Explorer

Luxury safari company &Beyond is launching its first river cruise experience in the Peruvian Amazon in September. The sustainably designed vessel with just 15 suites has a spa, gym and pool deck on board, with itineraries offering skiff outings, piranha fishing and nocturnal rainforest adventures.

67 Pall Mall

The international wine-focused private members club brand will introduce a world-class dining and service experience to Melbourne, this year, with hospitality concepts led by Martin Benn and Vicki Wild (Sepia). Over four levels, the Spring Street site will boast a 5000-reference wine list from 42 countries, a rooftop terrace and a seafood bar.



WHERE TO STAY



PHOTOGRAPHY MATTIA AQUILA (VILLA SAN MICHELE).

Ardour Milton Park Bowral

The historic Milton Park estate in the Southern Highlands relaunches in January, with signature restaurant Horderns significantly upsized and upgraded, and a dedicated charcuterie room joining The Polo Bar. Following a multi-million-dollar renovation, the grand homestead's 44 guest rooms have a refreshed palette with sage tones, timber and natural murals.

Capella Kyoto

Launching in March, the new four-storey hotel evokes traditional wooden Japanese townhouses. Guests of the 89 rooms (including 29 suites) have access to six exclusive onsen suites offering a private bathing experience. A central courtyard and moss garden, Japanese restaurant, French brasserie and Auriga Spa are on site, too.

Villa San Michele

Following an 18-month closure for restoration, Belmond's iconic Florentine property reopens in April. Looking out to the Arno Valley, the 15th-century monastery's 39 rooms and suites have been redesigned, three signature suites added, along with a spa by Guerlain, reimagined Renaissance-inspired gardens, and a new dining offering.

The Bonobo by Raes

Beloved Wategos hotel Raes is expanding to a 41-room hotel-apartment concept in the heart of Byron Bays. Opening in autumn, the new three-level modernist building has been designed by Richards & Spence, the visionaries behind The Calile Hotel. A central courtyard flanked by restaurants, bars, wellness offerings and elevated retail tenancies will complete the luxury proposition.



Umi Resort Uluwatu

Bali is set to welcome a new Australian-owned resort in May. Seven private villas, 92 rooms and suites will enjoy views over the three-tiered pool, amid 1.5 kilometres of tropical gardens. The restaurant will blend Asian and Middle Eastern cuisines, all of which is being crafted with sustainability and support of the local communities in mind.

La Réserve Firenze

June will see the premier hospitality brand debuting in Italy with a collection of six private apartments (each with one to three bedrooms) designed by Parisian studio Gilles & Boissier. Set in a 15th-century palazzo in the heart of Florence, the hotel will have a library, gym, lounge and rooftop terrace under 10 minutes' walk from the Uffizi.

Four Seasons Resort Mykonos

Peering over Kalo Livadi Bay, the new 94-room destination opening mid-2026 will offer direct beach access, four restaurants, private villas with ocean views, and infinity pools over the Aegean.

QT Queenstown

The Lake Wakatipu waterfront will welcome an expanded QT in May, the existing property absorbing the former Rydges and updating its 152 rooms. Additions are set to include food and beverage experiences, a gym, pool, and facilities for hikers, mountain bikers and snowsports enthusiasts.



Clockwise from left: Three Blue Ducks Burradoo team; Côte Basque's Jo McGann and Andrew McConnell; Milton Park's Hordens. Opposite, clockwise from bottom left: Umi Resort Uluwatu's three-tiered pool; and its suite interiors; the courtyard at The Bonobo by Raes; and La Réserve Firenze interiors.

NEW RESTAURANTS

Three Blue Ducks Burradoo

Having recently celebrated 15 years, the restaurant group is expanding to a Southern Highlands farm with a restaurant, bakery and shop, plus school education programs offered via the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation.

Restaurant Aptos, Bar Cruz and Bar Mary

The Adelaide Hills will score a three-part dining experience in an 1860s church from chef Justin James in March. Fourteen-seat

Restaurant Aptos serving 16-course set menus; three-zone Bar Cruz for cocktails and à la carte dining; and eight-seat whisky den Bar Mary.

Lumachelle

Chef Analiese Gregory will launch her intimate restaurant Lumachelle in a 115-year-old cottage on her farm near Hobart. Tasmanian produce, including wild-sourced and -foraged ingredients, will star with Gregory sharing her low-impact approach to sourcing for just 10 guests at a time.

Wayfinder Estate

The Margaret River winery is launching a purpose-built wine and dining hub in Cowaramup in autumn. Expanding the market garden that services its current Dunsborough restaurant to an acre, the new restaurant will offer seasonal dining and bespoke tasting experiences.

Lucas Collective

A modern Chinese restaurant and a Mediterranean venue largely focusing on the cuisine of owner Chris Lucas' Greek heritage, are in the works for the ever-growing group. Both will be in Melbourne's 435 Bourke Street precinct.

Côte Basque

This winter, Andrew McConnell and Jo McGann will introduce a wood-fired, Basque-inspired restaurant in the mid-century Melbourne site that was Becco. Seating 100, it'll have outdoor dining and a private room. ●



Hot in the city

There's no need to deliberate between beach and metropolis, writes **ALICE WASLEY**. Just do both.

THOSE DAYS WHEN YOU CAN'T GET A SEAT ON THE TRAIN and you're facing eight hours of back-to-back meetings, the fantasy of being shipwrecked on a tropical island, Robinson Crusoe-style, is quite appealing. But, in reality, after a few days wouldn't you be ready to swap the isolation and coconut juice for a decent coffee and some good conversation? That's where beach cities come into their own. They have the escapist spirit of a coastal adventure, with all the best things that civilisation offers; rich culture, vibrant nightlife, delicious food and impressive architecture. Here, we round up our favourites.

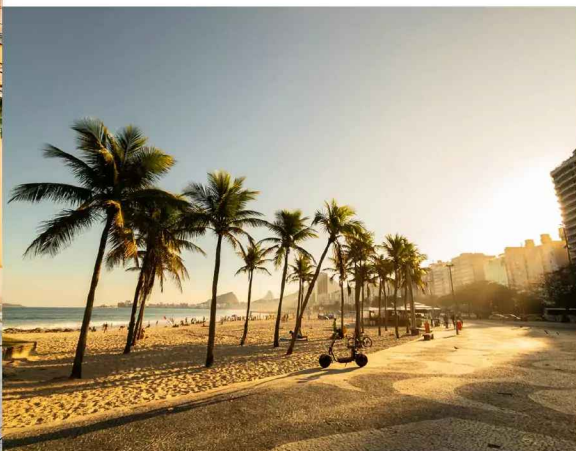
BARCELONA, SPAIN

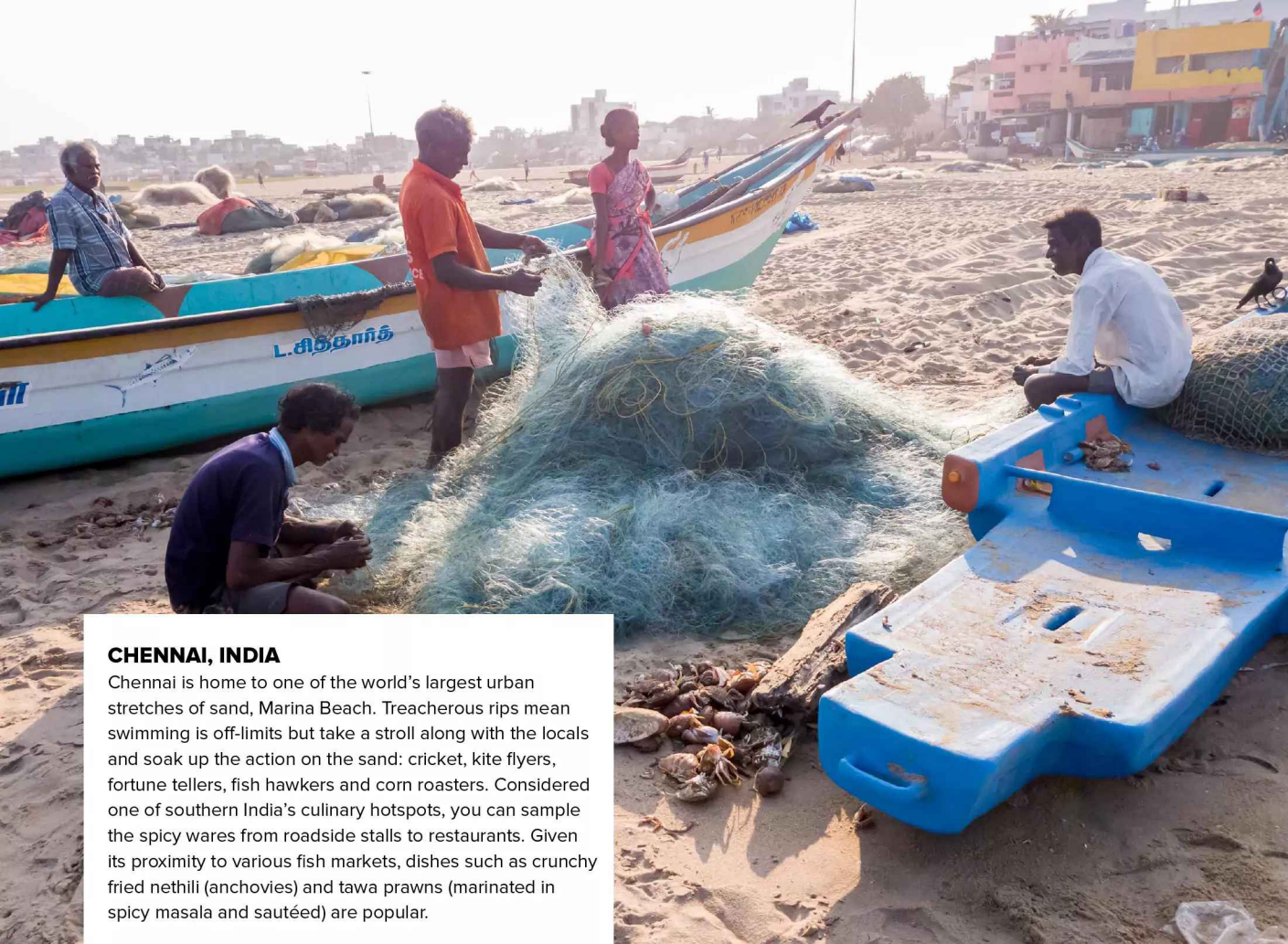
Pack your zinc cream and floppy hat for Barcelona's five kilometres of golden coastline, but don't forget there's a lot more to do than just lie on the beach. Start the day chatting to stallholders at 800-year-old food market, La Boqueria. Like much of the city, it can be crowded, so visit early. Then wander around the Gothic Quarter's historic shops, where you can pick up artisan fans, handcrafted espadrilles, check out the Herboristeria del Rei, where Salvador Dalí went for herbs, spices and essential oils, stop by Xarcuteria La Pineda for olives and charcuterie. Later on, drop into the Picasso Museum, admire Antoni Gaudí's almost finished Sagrada Família. Finish the day with some tapas-bar hopping, to sample Catalan-style snacks and fuel up for dancing by the beach at one of the lively bars and clubs near Somorrostro.



RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL

Lock your itinerary away in your hotel safe, along with any valuables, and get swept up in the joyful chaos of one of the most beautiful beach cities in the world. With its lush peaks framing iconic beaches such as Copacabana and Ipanema, Rio – the home of the annual Carnival, a pre-Lent celebration with parades, elaborate costumes and dancing in the street – is something of a playground for adults. Hit the beach and grab a Caipirinha, Brazil's national cocktail, from one of the many kiosks. Watch the sun set, admire the moves of samba dancers on the sand, then find a barbecue joint and see where the night takes you.





CHENNAI, INDIA

Chennai is home to one of the world's largest urban stretches of sand, Marina Beach. Treacherous rips mean swimming is off-limits but take a stroll along with the locals and soak up the action on the sand: cricket, kite flyers, fortune tellers, fish hawkers and corn roasters. Considered one of southern India's culinary hotspots, you can sample the spicy wares from roadside stalls to restaurants. Given its proximity to various fish markets, dishes such as crunchy fried nethili (anchovies) and tawa prawns (marinated in spicy masala and sautéed) are popular.



SPLIT, CROATIA

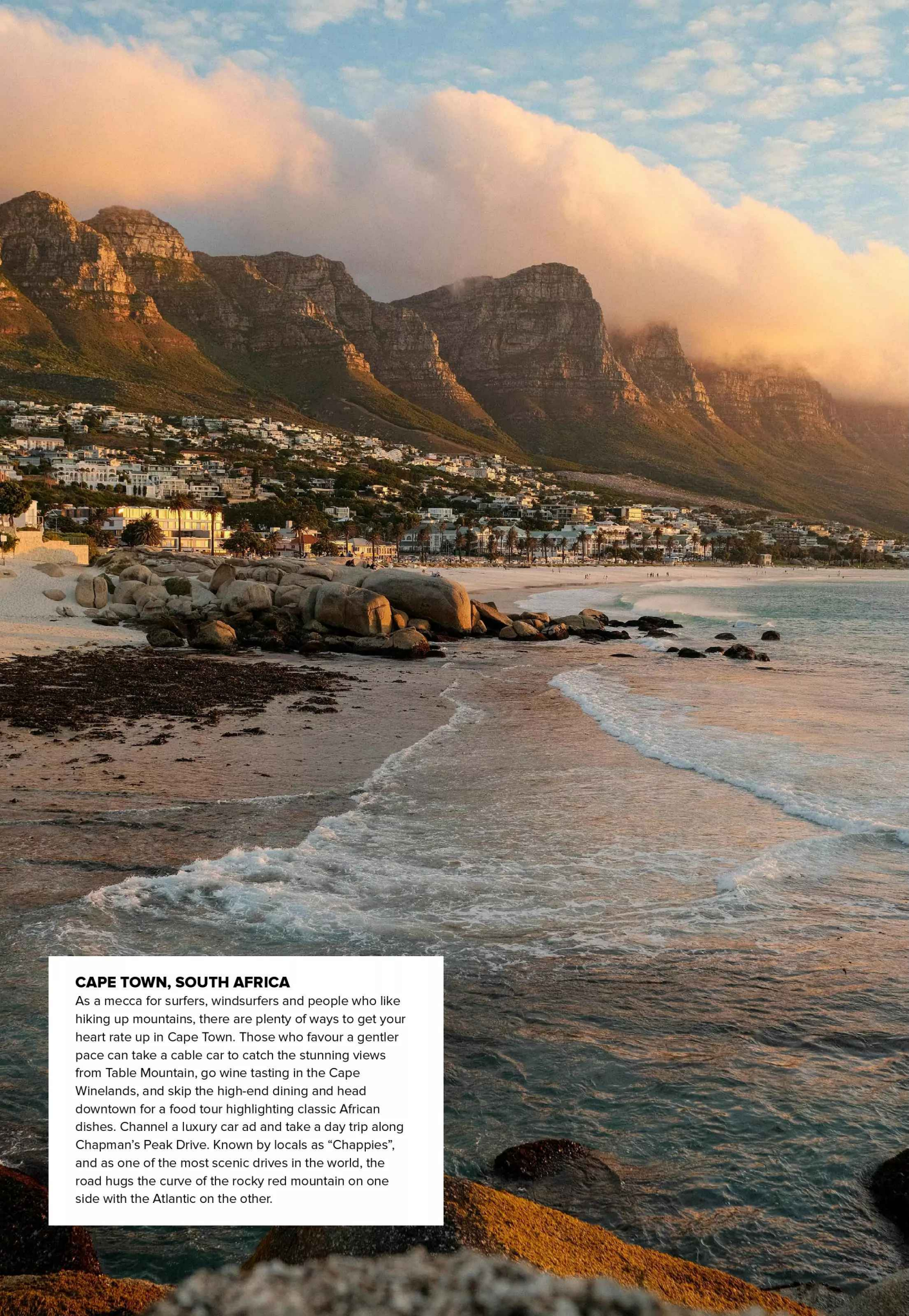
Beach with a side of ancient Roman architecture, anyone? At the centre of Split is the walled Old Town, where you'll find the extensive remains of the Roman Emperor Diocletian's Palace (a UNESCO World Heritage site). The closest beach is the busy Bačvice where locals come to play picigin (a traditional ball game) in the shallows. The café game is strong here; get your caffeine fix with views of the dazzling Adriatic along the palm-lined Riva. After a day of exploring (note: you might have to dodge some *Game of Thrones* diehards touring locations featured on the hit show), take in some open-air live music and pop into one of the many seafood restaurants for grilled fish, slow-cooked octopus and deep-fried whitebait.



MIAMI, USA

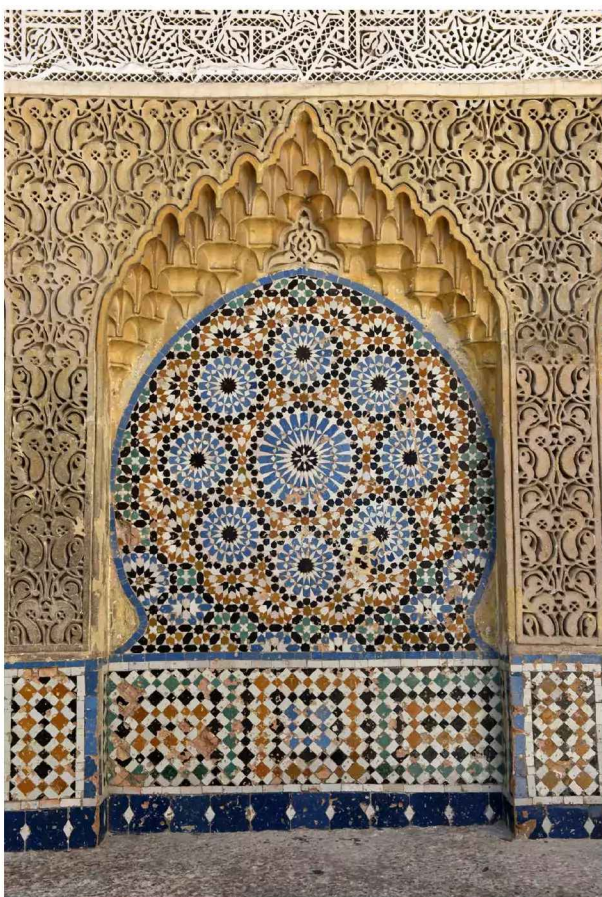
Miami might have a reputation as one big party, but its fascinating history and the rich influence of Cuban culture give it a lot more nuance. After people-watching at glitzy South Beach head to Little Havana to watch the locals play dominoes in the park, check out some live Latin music and salsa dancing, and seek out the best Cuban sandwiches. Stop by one of the many tiny windows dotted throughout the city serving Cuban coffee and then head to Miami Beach for a slice of key lime pie at the famous Joe's Stone Crab restaurant, which has been around for more than 100 years.





CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA

As a mecca for surfers, windsurfers and people who like hiking up mountains, there are plenty of ways to get your heart rate up in Cape Town. Those who favour a gentler pace can take a cable car to catch the stunning views from Table Mountain, go wine tasting in the Cape Winelands, and skip the high-end dining and head downtown for a food tour highlighting classic African dishes. Channel a luxury car ad and take a day trip along Chapman's Peak Drive. Known by locals as "Chappies", and as one of the most scenic drives in the world, the road hugs the curve of the rocky red mountain on one side with the Atlantic on the other.



TANGIER, MOROCCO

An exception to the unwritten rule that IQs tend to drop a few points the closer you get to the beach, Tangier has long attracted writers, artists and intellectuals. The café scene has been a popular backdrop for resident bohemians, including the tiny, smoke-filled, blue-walled Café Baba, hidden down a narrow alleyway (patrons included the Beat writers and the Rolling Stones). If you need to clear your head after all that ruminating over mint tea, take a trip to the Cap Spartel headland and visit the iconic Hispano-Moorish-style lighthouse where you can see precisely where the Atlantic meets the Mediterranean.

SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA

This is a city that sets its alarm early. To be part of the action, make your way to Bondi Beach at dawn for a dip in the Pacific. You'll see ocean swimmers, surfers, and, if you're lucky, a humpback whale on its annual migration north. Once you've worked up an appetite there's fluffy scrambled eggs, sourdough toast and a very good flat white waiting for you at one of Sydney's many bustling cafés. Keep in mind that cost of living is peaking, so budget accordingly. If you can drag yourself away from the sand, there's gallery-hopping in Paddington, wine bars in Surry Hills and world-class theatre, opera and live music at the iconic Sydney Opera House in the city.



Worth your salt

Its reputation has ebbed and flowed but as **IVY CARRUTH** discovers, seasoning from the sea is back in fashion.

SALT IS LIFE. I MEAN THAT IN THE LITERAL sense, and in the sense of all things flavour. With a nod to journalistic transparency, and just so you know who you're dealing with here, I'll confess: I'm one of those heathens who salts my food before even tasting it.

Several years ago, my partner and I were at a super-celebrated, über-cheffy Sydney restaurant, after inheriting a booking that a friend had made months in advance, only to find herself unable to use. "Did we want it?" she'd asked. We did.

So, we're sitting there, smugly enjoying our luck and the atmosphere, gawping at this striking space alongside one of the world's most iconic landmarks. The bread came out with a flourish, as everything tends to at a restaurant of this calibre, fat and tawny, with the open, lacy crumb that heralds a proper sourdough.

The butter, though? Unsalted. The sacrilege of serving such bland *beurre* with this leavened perfection was a betrayal. Soon enough, and before I even asked, my partner flagged someone down. "Can we get some salt, please?"

The waiter, pausing, looked pained. "I'll need to ask Chef," he told us with trepidation. "The way it's presented is the way Chef thinks you should eat it." Then he literally spun on his heel.

That was when I began carrying a tiny tin of Maldon in my bag.

Samin Nosrat, author of the James Beard Award-winning tome *Salt, Fat, Acid, Heat*, believes there's something almost sacred about salt. Just a single flake can summon the ocean; we've been told for years to beware. Too much salt, too much risk, too much of a good thing. She suggests, "Get used to the way the salt falls from your hands; experience the illicit thrill of using so much of something we've all been taught to fear."

Too much isn't good for us – though it's worth noting that processed foods are the main culprits, overloaded as they are with salt during manufacturing to preserve shelf life. To state the obvious, *Gourmet Traveller* readers are not the core demographic for packaged foods. It's more about quality over quantity. Which makes it quietly thrilling that there's been a movement of late,



from the edges of the world where people make things with their hands. Salt is beautiful again.

Stand anywhere along Australia's largest wind-whittled isle, and the air smells alive. It's a bones-deep mix of seaweed, brine and new rain. Here, Tasman Sea Salt uses solar and thermal energy to produce its natural, low-sodium product – an ancient method that feels almost rebellious in a mechanised world. It's crisp and gentle, the sea's cold pulse rather than its sting, and a bright, flinty flavour that kitchen talent love for seafood.

Travel north-east, and you'll find Hawai'i, beloved by Antipodeans and where salt has always been elemental. On the Big Island, it's heavy with iron and story. The Alaea variety is tinted a rusty red by volcanic clay, used for preservation and cleansing long before it looked good on Instagram. Kona deep sea salt is drawn from black depths, minimally processed and evaporated over ebony lava rock before it reaches the plate. Those who know it love its nuanced flavour.

Across the Pacific, Okinawa's Nuchimasu takes the opposite approach. Their salt isn't flaked or chunky, but powder-fine, like twilight beach sand. It's made by spraying seawater through hot air, instantly creating microscopic granules rich in trace minerals. The result is salinity with a lick of sweetness, and locals believe it holds health benefits. It only makes sense for wellness to come from something so wild and weathered.

And then there's Nu Nu's citrus salt from Palm Cove in North Queensland. One pinch is a reminder that flavour can be joy, not just seasoning. It's unapologetically, lavishly sunny. A dash is a celebration; I buy drifts of it at Christmas and gift it to friends with vintage crockery. Accessible luxury at its best, I say.

If there's a celebrity among salts, it's Maldon. Those familiar pyramids of English sea salt have sat on kitchen shelves for more than a century.

The kind that costs a few dollars and lasts a lot longer than Champagne.

Done right, salt wants to amplify, not compete; just a moment on the tongue, then gone. It welcomes amateurs with the same enthusiasm as it does tweezer-wielding pros, a great equaliser for the rest of us. One of the most-loved in Australian pantries and professional kitchens alike is the pretty-in-pink Murray River Salt. The flakes are large and crush easily, so it functions well as a finisher. Cory Campbell, former head chef at Melbourne's Vue de Monde likes its crunch. It "has a very delicate flavour that enhances food without overpowering it," he says. Even Margot Robbie weighed in on her love for the

"savoury kick" it gives her favourite variety of Tim Tam's – the Murray River Salted Caramel.

But if there's a celebrity among salts, it's Maldon. Those familiar pyramids of English sea salt have sat on kitchen shelves for more than a century, bridging fine dining and family kitchens. Home cooks have RSVPed to the party, realising that yes, the type of salt matters. The difference between a flat crystal and a flake isn't

subtle at all; it's a form of alchemy.

Perhaps you can tell a cook by their salt. Those not in the know stick to the shaker. The bold keep jars of the stuff, each chosen for purpose; smoky, floral, citrusy, briny. Of course, there's still a bit of mischief in it. It's addictive in the most innocent way. The more you explore, the more you want to taste. Before long, you're buying glinting glass jars of sea crystals from some place you've never visited, convinced you'll use them sparingly, though you won't – and that's okay. Maybe that's the point of chasing this particular flavour; a connection to the coast, one grain at a time. ●



Done right, salt wants to amplify, not compete.

A man wearing a light blue t-shirt, dark shorts, and a light-colored cap is crouching in the shallow surf. He is holding a piece of yellow seaweed or kelp. The ocean is a deep blue with white foam from the waves. In the background, there are some dark, rocky structures. The sky is a pale blue with soft, white clouds. The overall scene is peaceful and captures a moment of coastal foraging.

SHORE THINGS

Some of the country's best restaurants are delving into coastal foraging with spectacular results, writes **GEORGIA CONDON**.

PHOTOGRAPHY **HELLENE ALGIE**



Left: professional forager Diego Bonetto in his element.

WHILE AMBLING ALONG THE BEACH IN search of the perfect shell is a familiar pastime, chances are very few of us have considered the enriching potential of foraging for edible plants and seaweeds. But perhaps we should. Appearing increasingly often on dishes at the country's best restaurants, they connect hyper-local and seasonal produce with First Nations knowledge and practices around bush foods; a true expression of Australian cuisine.

An appealing combination of culinary culture, ecology and anthropology, foraging offers a closer connection to what we eat, and a deeper appreciation for our surroundings, close to home, or away on a beach holiday. So, where to start?

"Foraging should be done in knowledge, with knowledge," says Diego Bonetto, professional forager, educator and author of *Eat Weeds: A Field Guide to Foraging*, a comprehensive manual on finding and identifying edible plants.

Foraging is typically allowed on private land with the owner's permission, Bonetto explains, but you cannot harvest from national parks or in marine reserves, and every state has protected species that must not be disrupted. Guiding principles of treading lightly and only taking what you need should be observed. "It's important to collect ethically and consciously," he cautions.

Technicalities covered, he suggests a simple place to kick off a foraging foray: "An easy way to start is with seaweeds, which you find on the beach when the ocean brings them to you." Making it less daunting is the fact there are no known toxic seaweeds in Australia, and they can be harvested in every state as long as they're beach-cast and not attached at the holdfast. "I love golden kelp; it's a species I regularly forage," says Bonetto.

A few steps inland towards the dunes, beach mustard deserves a spot in the knowledge bank of fishers, in particular. "It's a spicy member of the brassica family," says Bonetto. "You can get your raw fish, and then it's a crunchy, wasabi-flavoured plant to go with it, there on the beach."

It can't be ignored that foraging as a discipline has gained an unsavoury reputation in recent years following its beef Wellington-affiliated PR disaster – so Bonetto suggests contacting local councils or environmental departments for resources if you're seeking starter knowledge.



Above: Diego Bonetto regularly forages golden kelp.

“They’re made to empower people with identification skills, and your local council will be specific to what grows locally.”

Expert-led workshops, like those Bonetto runs in Sydney, are an approachable way to gain confidence when taking those first steps.

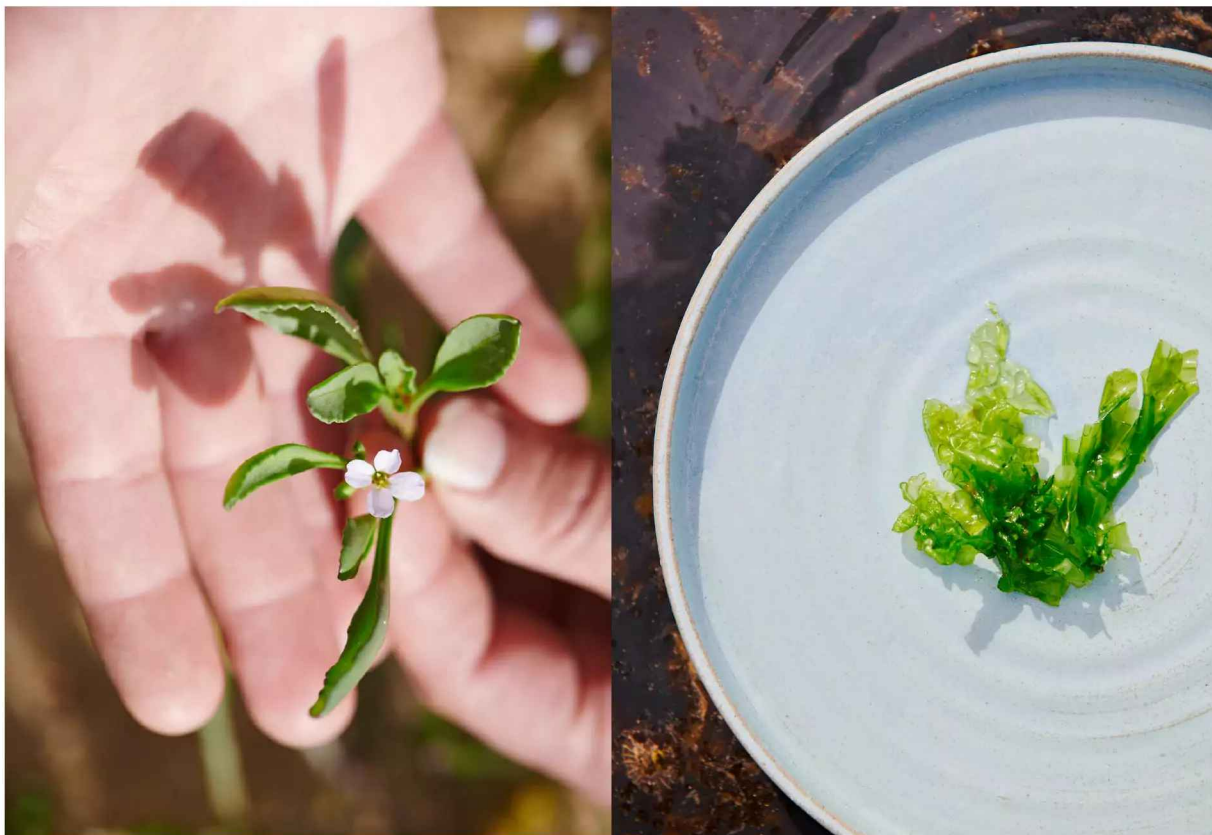
Many foraging excursions are hosted by First Nations people sharing knowledge and traditions around native foods, and exploring ongoing relationships with Country. In the Kimberley, Djugun elder Patricia “Mamamnyjun” Torres of bush foods business Mayi Harvests offers tours and workshops of Broome and its surrounds. Kuku Yalanji man Juan Walker hosts tours of the southern Daintree and coastal areas through his business Walkabout Cultural Adventures, and Palawa woman Kitana Mansell of native food business Palawa Kipli runs bush tucker tours around Hobart’s Risdon Cove.

Species often seen adorning restaurant dishes include asparagus-like samphire and ice plant, which is covered in tiny crystalline beads. Sea lettuce shows up at Ben Devlin’s restaurant Pipit, in Pottsville, where the frilly rock platform-growing seaweed has been turned into spherical “caviar” jellies to dress tarts or oysters.

In Byron Bay, Karkalla – the restaurant run by Bundjalung chef Mindy Woods – takes its name from the commonly found, and often foraged, native species karkalla. Growing along most of the southern half of the continent and commonly called pigface, karkalla is easily identifiable by its vibrant pink flowers, which turn to jammy, scarlet fruits in summer. The crunchy leaves take well to stir-fries or flash-cooking on the barbecue.

Warrigal greens are commonly called native spinach, a leafy specimen that can be substituted anywhere its mainstream counterpart is used. Even better, picking the leaves encourages new growth. At Kiln, the rooftop restaurant of Sydney’s Ace Hotel led by chef-partner Beau Clugston (also the owner of Copenhagen restaurant Iluka), they’re sautéed before being slicked with mussel butter sauce to accompany grilled Kurobuta pork neck.

“Growing up on the coast, you naturally become aware of the plants around you: beach banana, warrigal greens, saltbush, wild nasturtiums and bull kelp washed up on the shore,” recalls Clugston, who was raised in Sawtell near Coffs Harbour. Even so, his understanding of the fine-dining potential of such coastal species wasn’t



Clockwise from above: Diego Bonetto's foraged beach mustard and sea lettuce; and the coastal platter at Kiln.

fully realised until 2016, when he was involved with the 10-week Sydney stint of acclaimed Danish restaurant Noma. "We connected with foragers around the country who had deep cultural, medicinal and food knowledge," he says. "That experience completely shifted how I saw our coastline and what it offers."

Ten years on, all that insight has fed into a dish called the coastal platter which appears on the summer menu at Kiln, which he describes as: "Local seafood and coastal plants like ice plant, karkalla, sea purslane, saltbush or samphire, changing daily. The plants and succulents make perfect accompaniment to all the amazing seafood this time of year."

When it comes to enjoying your haul beyond munching in situ, common wisdom suggests "what grows together goes together", making seafood dishes the obvious opportunity for the crunch, saltiness and colour of foraged coastal species. However, most wouldn't be out of place in a leafy salad, with poultry, or in a favourite pickle or preserve.

"I love serving these ingredients as naturally as possible so nothing gets in the way of their purity and sense of place," Clugston says. "Fresh, crisp, raw, preserved, they shine when you keep your hand light." •





PHOTOGRAPHY GETTY IMAGES



The new nostalgia

Overwhelmed by modern life? The simple pleasures of an old-school holiday might just be the perfect antidote, writes **IVY CARRUTH**.

SOMETHING IS HAPPENING ALONG Australia's coastline; something polished and styled that reimagines the retreat we're all desperately seeking this summer. It smells of coconutty Coppertone and sounds like mums yelling, "Put a shirt on, you're burning!" The nostalgic beach holiday has made a graceful, very welcome return, though it leaves behind the scorching vinyl seats and the dads in dangerously tiny footy shorts. Thank God.

Is it any wonder we're craving comfort? There's an easy reassurance in the soft slam of a screen door; in the striped canvas awnings that have become the unofficial flag of the retro beach motel. Paired with speckled terrazzo floors and more-comfortable-than-they-used-to-be rattan lounges, they give modern design a sense of memory. Leisure doesn't have to be shouty to feel luxurious, and, besides, people are defining that term differently these days.

Across the country, the old humble beach break is a rising star thanks in part to the careful refinement of boutique motel-style accommodation. Where once there was basically a single shining star – the Tweed Coast's Halcyon House in Cabarita – we're now seeing more breeze blocked, palm-fringed architecture like Rottne

Island's Samphire, the Kyneton Springs Motel in Victoria, and the Mysa Motel, a pastel-hued haven in Queensland's Palm Beach.

But what's nostalgia without the taste of it to match? The food of those coastal holidays is as deeply imprinted in our psyche as the smell of a salt-damp paperback. We remember sangas in foil, flattened in the Esky, icy poles that turned our tongues an unnatural shade of blue, and the oily crunch of paper-wrapped potato scallops from our searing perch on a low brick wall.

Daggy no more, fibro cottages in Crescent Head and faded neon in Noosa are pure Aussie summer déjà vu. These are places not trying to reinvent themselves as much as they are remembering what worked, and revelling in the ease of it.

Psychologists say it has less to do with the past and more to do with how we feel about the present. Dr Krystine Batcho, a professor of psychology in New York, has studied nostalgia for more than 20 years. She describes sentiment as a "psychological resource, something we draw upon when the future feels uncertain". After a few years of collective unease, it seems we're dipping into this resource like kids into a lolly jar for that "stabilising force that can strengthen our sense of personal continuity, reminding us that we ►

These are throwbacks done with polish,
not with kitsch for kitch's sake; it's the echo
of the past that feels so comforting, a trade
in vintage charm more so than novelty.
Lo-fi luxury is all the rage.

possess a store of powerful memories deeply intertwined with our identity". In a nutshell, it soothes our souls.

They're everywhere if you know where to look. On the Mornington Peninsula, The Keith Motel is a retro-cool refurb with custom art and turquoise doors, and in Yeppoon, Surfside Motel is bathed in white and beachfront perfect. Western Australia has The Timothée Resort in laid-back Busselton, and in New South Wales, The Isla and her sister hotel, Casita, make Batehaven the ideal spot for sundowners under festoon lights. (Make ours a Gimlet.)

Maybe it was *Mad Men* that kicked it all off, with its mid-century aesthetic of open-plan living, and glass doors connecting the inside to the outside. Life was simpler then (or so we like to believe). Of course, now these respites offer a much more comfortable experience – spas, screaming-fast WiFi, and, in the case of Halcyon House, a two-hatted restaurant. These are throwbacks done with polish, not with kitsch for kitsch's sake; it's the echo of the past that feels so comforting, a trade in vintage charm more so than novelty. Lo-fi luxury is all the rage.

Economists might call our drive for familiarity a symptom of uncertainty. Psychologists call it recalibration. Richard White, a prominent historian specialising in travel and tourism at the University of Sydney, wrote the book, *On Holidays: A History of Getting Away in Australia*. "The

standard Australian beach holiday has dissolved into a plethora of niches," he says. And perhaps that's one way of thinking about it. "For many Australians, memories of those older holidays are overwhelmingly positive, the sensual pleasures of childhood, long days of vacancy..." But it's not all sentiment without substance.

There's also a generational spin: for millennials and Gen Xers, nostalgia isn't meant to be relived; it's meant to be enjoyed from an adult perspective. They're collecting cultural memories – 1980s pastels, vinyl record players – and mixing them into something of the moment. Psychologists call this anticipatory nostalgia; a bittersweet emotion you feel now, knowing you'll miss this moment in the future when it isn't even over. It's also a reaction against the algorithmic sameness of modern life. When everything starts to feel like everything else, nostalgia offers texture.

The new nostalgia has refined taste – edited for today. The fish and chip shop now does line-caught flathead with hand-cut fries; the minibar stocks natural wine and chilli-salt macadamias. In the café, cherry-topped sundaes and prawn cocktails in shallow coupe glasses feature on the menu without irony.

So, turn up the speakers and let Icehouse drift through the open windows. "Great Southern Land" carries on the breeze, equal parts pride and longing, and it still finds that sweet space between remembering and moving on. ●



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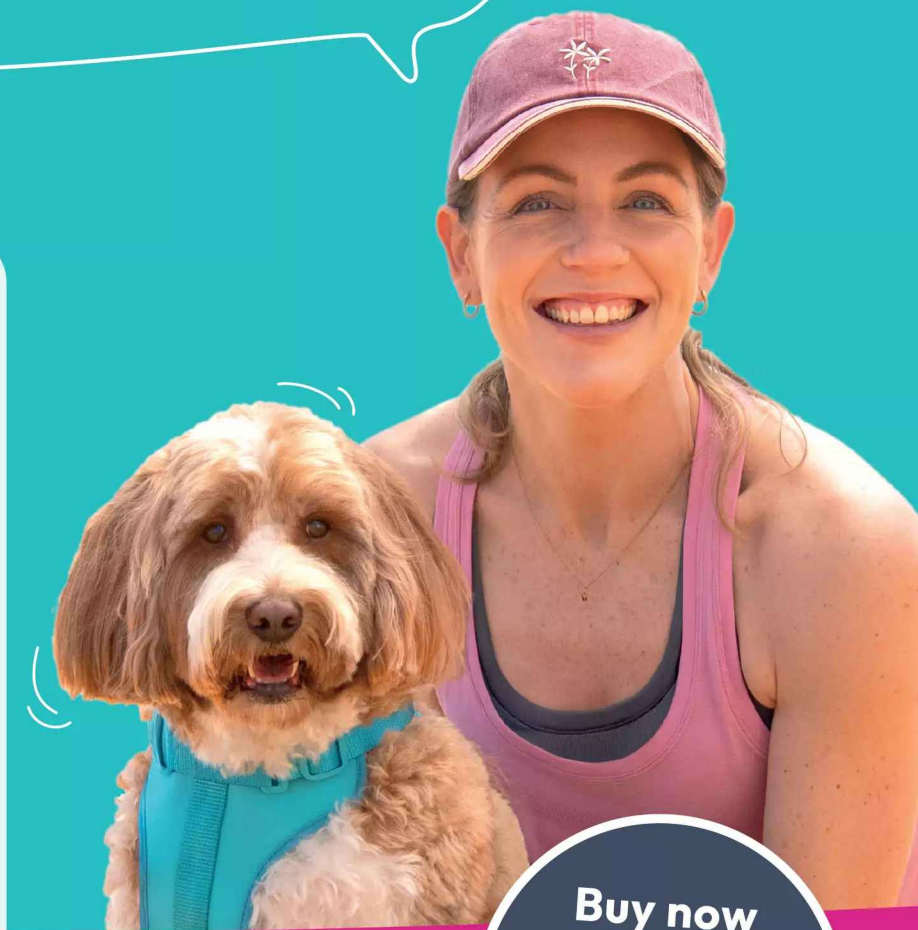


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Food

RECIPES TO INSPIRE, FROM
WEEKNIGHT DINNERS TO
IMPRESSIVE CROWD-PLEASERS



Gourmet Traveller uses free-range pork supplied by Australian Pork in the GT Test Kitchen and in all our photo shoots.



Lennox Hastie's grilled bavette with charred onions and romesco, p98,
and charred corn with Espelette butter and manchego, p100.



PHOTOGRAPHY **JAMES MOFFATT**
RECIPES & STYLING **MAXWELL ADEY**
FOOD PREPARATION **KATHY KNUDSEN**

Everyday

Easy entertaining, simple weeknight dinners and suppers to share.

Bruschetta with whipped feta, jamón and cherries

MAKES 8 // PREP 10 MINS // COOK 5 MINS (PLUS PICKLING)

- 250 gm cherries
- 60 ml (¼ cup) red wine vinegar
- 1 tbsp caster sugar
- 1 tbsp thyme, plus extra to serve
- 200 gm Danish feta
- 1½ tbsp lemon juice
- 1 garlic clove, finely chopped
- 70 ml extra-virgin olive oil
- 8 thick slices rye sourdough
- 8 slices (about 70gm) jamón Ibérico
- 1 bunch rocket, leaves picked

1 Using the heel of your hand, squash cherries on a board to release the pit. Combine cherries, vinegar, sugar, thyme and ½ tsp each cracked black pepper and salt flakes in a bowl and stand, tossing occasionally, to quick pickle.

2 Process feta, lemon juice and garlic in a small food processor until smooth. With motor running, add 50ml oil in a thin, steady stream and process until emulsified; season to taste and set aside.

3 Meanwhile, preheat a barbecue or lightly greased char-grill pan to high. Brush bread with remaining oil, then grill, turning once, until golden (1-2 minutes each side). Spread with whipped feta, then top with jamón, cherries and rocket to serve.



PRODUCE TIP

This recipe works just as well with other summer fruits – try blood plums, peaches or rockmelon in place of the cherries.





GF

Prawns with fragrant curry leaf butter and raita salad

SERVES 4-6 AS A STARTER // PREP 30 MINS // COOK 10 MINS (PLUS MARINATING)

- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- ½ tsp chilli flakes
- 3 tsp ground turmeric
- 60 ml (¼ cup) grapeseed oil
- 12 extra-jumbo uncooked tiger prawns (about 80gm each), peeled, deveined, tails intact
- 150 gm salted butter, diced
- 3 curry leaf sprigs
- 1 tbsp finely grated ginger
- 1 tsp each brown mustard seeds, chilli flakes and nigella seeds
- 15 gm (¼ cup) shredded coconut
- RAITA SALAD**
- 150 gm Greek-style yoghurt
- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- Finely grated zest of 1 lime, plus 2 tbsp juice and wedges, to serve
- 1 green mango, peeled and cut into julienne

- 1 fennel, thinly sliced on a mandolin, fronds reserved
- 1 Lebanese cucumber, thinly sliced into rounds
- 1 small red onion, thinly sliced
- 1 long green chilli, very thinly sliced
- 1 cup each (loosely packed) mint and coriander

1 Combine garlic, chilli flakes, 2 tsp ground turmeric and 2 tbsp oil in a large bowl, season, add prawns, turn to coat and stand to marinate (10 minutes).

2 For raita salad, whisk yoghurt, garlic, lime zest and juice in a large bowl and season to taste. Add remaining ingredients and dress just before serving.

3 Heat remaining oil in a large frying pan over high heat until almost smoking. Add prawns and sauté until almost cooked through (2-3 minutes). Transfer prawns to a bowl.

4 Reduce heat to medium. Add butter, curry leaves, ginger, nigella seeds, chilli flakes and mustard seeds and cook, swirling pan occasionally, until fragrant and nut brown (4-5 minutes). Stir in coconut and cook, stirring, until toasted (1-2 minutes). Return prawns to pan and turn to coat in butter. Remove from heat and season to taste.

5 Serve prawns with raita salad and lime wedges (see note).

Note This is great with warm roti or naan bread on the side. ►

GF

Smoky pork loin tacos with shaved cabbage, pickled onion and salsa verde

SERVES 4 // PREP 20 MINS // COOK 25 MINS (PLUS MARINATING, PICKLING)

- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 2 tsp each smoked paprika and ground cumin
- 1 tsp chilli flakes
- 1¼ tsp dried oregano
- 60 ml (¼ cup) extra-virgin olive oil, plus extra for drizzling
- 4 pork loin steaks (150gm each)
- 1 small Spanish onion, thinly sliced into rounds
- 60 ml (¼ cup) white wine vinegar
- 1 tsp caster sugar
- 12 corn tortillas
- ¼ red cabbage, thinly shaved on a mandolin
- 4 radishes, thinly sliced on a mandolin
- 2 small avocados, thinly sliced
- Hot sauce, to serve

SALSA VERDE

- 1 cup (firmly packed) coriander, plus extra to serve
- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- 1 jalapeño, coarsely chopped
- 125 ml (½ cup) extra-virgin olive oil
- Finely grated zest of 1 lime, plus 60ml (¼ cup) juice, plus wedges, to serve

- 1 Combine garlic, spices, 1 tsp dried oregano and olive oil in a large bowl and season. Add pork and massage to coat. Set aside to marinate (10 minutes).
- 2 Meanwhile, combine onion, vinegar, sugar and remaining ¼ tsp dried oregano in a bowl, season and toss to coat. Stand, tossing occasionally, to quick pickle.

- 3 Heat a barbecue or lightly greased char-grill pan to high. Drizzle pork with a little oil, season and grill, turning once, until browned (4-5 minutes each side). Rest for 10 minutes.

- 4 For salsa verde, blend ingredients in a high-speed blender until bright green and smooth. Season.

- 5 Char tortillas, in batches, on an open flame or on a char-grill pan (30 seconds to 1 minute each side; keep tortillas covered in a tea towel to keep warm and avoid drying out). Thinly slice pork steaks. Serve warm tortillas with pork, cabbage, radish, avocado, pickled onion, salsa verde, coriander, lime wedges and hot sauce.



COOKING TIP

We've used corn tortillas to make this gluten-free, but soft and fluffy flour tortillas are a great alternative.





V

Sticky Xinjiang-spiced tofu skewers with Chinese-style slaw

SERVES 4 // PREP 25 MINS // COOK 17 MINS (PLUS MARINATING)

- 2 tbsp light soy sauce
- 1 tbsp dark soy sauce
- 2 tbsp honey
- 1 tsp each Sichuan peppercorns, chilli flakes and cumin seeds, coarsely crushed
- 2 450gm block firm tofu
- 3 spring onions, white part only, cut into 3.5cm lengths
- Grapeseed oil, for drizzling
- Thinly sliced red chilli and toasted sesame seeds, to serve
- BANG BANG DRESSING**
- 1 garlic clove, finely chopped
- 2 tsp finely grated ginger
- 1 tsp chilli flakes
- 60 ml (¼ cup) grapeseed oil
- 80 gm hulled tahini
- 60 ml each (¼ cup) light soy sauce and rice vinegar
- 1 tbsp sesame oil

CHINESE-STYLE SLAW

- 400 gm Chinese cabbage, finely shaved on a mandolin
 - 2 baby bok choy, thinly sliced
 - 2 small Lebanese cucumber, halved lengthways, seeds removed, thinly sliced on an angle
 - 2 small carrots, cut into julienne
 - 2 spring onions, green part only, cut into julienne, plus extra to serve
 - 1 cup (firmly packed) coriander, plus extra to serve
- 1 Combine soy sauces, honey and spices in a large bowl. Pat tofu dry with paper towel. Cut each block of tofu into into 16 equal rectangular pieces (about 1.5cm thick, 4.5cm x 3.5cm), add to marinade and turn to coat. Stand to marinate (10 minutes).

- 2 For bang bang dressing, stir garlic, ginger, chilli and oil in a small saucepan over low heat until fragrant and light golden (6-8 minutes). Remove from heat; whisk in remaining ingredients to combine, transfer to a bowl and refrigerate to cool (20 minutes).
- 3 Heat a barbecue or lightly greased char-grill pan to high. Thread tofu onto 8 skewers, alternating with spring onions. Drizzle skewers with a little oil, and grill, brushing frequently with marinade, turning occasionally, until glazed and charred (3-5 minutes). Transfer to a tray.
- 4 For Chinese-style slaw, combine ingredients in a large bowl.
- 5 Serve skewers and slaw, drizzled with bang bang dressing and scattered with extra coriander, spring onion, sliced chilli and sesame seeds. ►

GF

Peri peri char-grilled chicken with potato and corn salad

SERVES 4 // PREP 25 MINS // COOK 55 MINS (PLUS MARINATING, RESTING)

- 1 whole chicken (about 1.8kg),
butterflied
- Extra-virgin olive oil, for drizzling
- 1 kg kifpler potatoes, peeled and cut
into 1cm-thick rounds
- 100 gm mayonnaise
- 50 gm sour cream
- 1 garlic clove, finely grated
- Finely grated zest of 1 lemon, plus
60ml juice
- 2 corn cobs, husks and silks removed
- 1 small Spanish onion, finely diced
- ½ cup each (loosely packed) dill and
mint, coarsely chopped
- PERI PERI SAUCE**
- 4 long red chillies (about 120gm),
coarsely chopped (see note)
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 tbsp finely chopped thyme
- 2 tsp smoked paprika
- 125 ml (½ cup) extra-virgin olive oil
- 80 ml (⅓ cup) red wine vinegar

1 For peri peri sauce, combine ingredients in a high-speed blender and blend until very smooth. Season to taste and set aside.

2 Place chicken in a large bowl, add half the peri peri sauce and massage to coat. Stand to marinate (15 minutes; see note).

3 Meanwhile, place potatoes in a large saucepan, cover with cold salted water, bring to the boil over medium-high heat and cook until tender when pierced with a knife (8-10 minutes). Drain, then cover with a clean tea towel to steam dry (5 minutes). Mix mayonnaise, sour cream, garlic, lemon zest and juice in a large bowl and season to taste. Add potatoes, turn to coat and refrigerate, turning occasionally, until chilled (30-45 minutes).

4 While potatoes are chilling, heat a hooded barbecue or lightly greased

char-grill pan to high. Drizzle chicken with olive oil and season. Place chicken on barbecue, breast-side up, and grill for 30 minutes. Turn chicken, place corn on char-grill around chicken and grill, turning corn, until corn is charred and chicken juices run clear when thigh is pierced with a skewer (10-15 minutes). Transfer chicken to a plate and rest loosely covered with aluminium foil (15 minutes).

5 Transfer corn to a chopping board and cut kernels from the cob. Add corn kernels, onion and herbs to potato salad and toss well to coat. Season to taste. Joint chicken and serve drizzled with extra peri peri sauce and potato and corn salad on the side

Note Deseed chillies if less heat is desired. If time permits, marinate the chicken overnight for extra flavour.





DOUBLE BATCH

We suggest making a double batch of the green miso sauce. It's delicious to flavour cooked rice, dress up roasted or steamed vegetables and accompany grilled seafood.



DF

Green tea soba noodles with poached chicken and green miso sauce

SERVES 4 AS A LIGHT MEAL // PREP 15 MINS // COOK 15 MINS

- 500 gm chicken breast fillets, halved lengthways
- 130 gm baby spinach leaves
- 2 cups (loosely packed) coriander
- 3 spring onions, thinly sliced
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 2 tsp finely grated ginger
- 2 tbsp shiro (white) miso
- 2 tsp sesame oil
- 60 ml (¼ cup) lemon juice
- 180 gm green-tea soba noodles
- 200 gm frozen podded edamame, defrosted

- 1** Place chicken in a saucepan of boiling salted water, reduce heat to low then simmer until just tender (10 minutes). Transfer chicken to a plate and stand until cool enough to handle, then coarsely shred. Reserve poaching liquid.
- 2** Meanwhile, for green miso sauce, reserve a small handful spinach and ¼ cup coriander for serving. Place remaining spinach and coriander, 2 spring onions, garlic, ginger, miso, sesame oil, lemon juice and 160ml (⅔ cup) reserved poaching liquid in

a large jug and blend with a hand-held blender until smooth.

- 3** Add 1 litre (4 cups) water to the saucepan with the poaching liquid and bring to the boil. Add noodles and cook until almost tender (3 minutes), then add edamame and cook until bright green and tender (1 minute). Drain, rinse under cold running water, drain well and transfer to a large bowl. Add reserved spinach and coriander, shredded chicken and miso sauce to the noodle mixture and toss to coat well. Season to taste. Sprinkle with remaining spring onion to serve. ►



WEEKEND ENTERTAINING

Pair this salad with our barbecued butterflied lamb leg with green fattoush (opposite) for a Middle Eastern feast.

GF V

Wild rice and lentil salad with pickled grapes, walnuts and za'atar dressing

SERVES 4-6 AS A SIDE // PREP 20 MINS // COOK 30 MINS (PLUS COOLING, DRYING OUT)

- 150 gm wild rice
- 100 gm small green lentils (Puy)
- 2 baby fennel, thinly sliced on a mandolin
- 3 celery stalks, thinly sliced on an angle
- 2 golden shallots, thinly sliced on a mandolin
- 100 gm roasted walnuts, coarsely chopped
- 2 cups (loosely packed) soft herbs, such as parsley, mint and dill
- 100 gm feta, thinly sliced
- Toasted sesame seeds, to serve
- PICKLED GRAPES**
- 250 gm red grapes, halved

- 80 ml (⅓ cup) each Sherry vinegar and white wine vinegar

- 1 tsp fennel seeds, coarsely crushed
- ZA'ATAR DRESSING**

- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- 1 tbsp za'atar

- 80 ml (⅓ cup) extra-virgin olive oil, plus extra for drizzling
- Finely grated zest of 1 lemon, plus 80ml lemon juice

1 Cook rice in a large saucepan of boiling water (10 minutes). Add lentils and cook until tender but not falling apart (18-25 minutes). Drain; rinse under cold running water to cool. Drain

again; spread on a tray and transfer to refrigerator to dry out (30 minutes).

2 For pickled grapes, place grapes in a heatproof bowl. Bring vinegar, fennel seeds, 1 tsp salt and 80ml water to the boil in a small saucepan. Pour over grapes and stand, tossing occasionally, to quick-pickle (20 minutes).

3 For dressing, place ingredients in a sealable jar, season; shake to emulsify.

4 Drain pickled grapes (discard liquid). Combine rice mixture, fennel, celery, shallot, pickled grapes, walnuts and herbs in a large bowl and dress with dressing. Season. Top with feta and scatter with sesame seeds to serve.

Barbecued butterflied lamb leg with green fattoush and mint yoghurt

SERVES 4 // PREP 30 MINS // COOK 35 MINS (PLUS MARINATING)

- 4 garlic cloves, crushed
- 2 tsp each baharat spice and ground cumin
- 60 ml (¼ cup) extra-virgin olive oil, plus extra for drizzling
- 1.2 kg butterflied lamb leg
- Micro parsley, micro mint and lemon wedges, to serve
- GREEN FATTOUSH**
- 1 Lebanese pita bread
- 165 ml (⅔ cup) extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 tbsp sumac
- 150 gm each green beans and sugar snap peas, trimmed
- 1 large garlic clove, crushed
- Finely grated zest of 2 lemons, plus 60ml (¼ cup) juice
- 2 Lebanese cucumbers, halved lengthways and sliced on an angle
- 2 green tomatoes, cut into wedges
- 2 spring onions, thinly sliced
- 1 baby cos, coarsely chopped

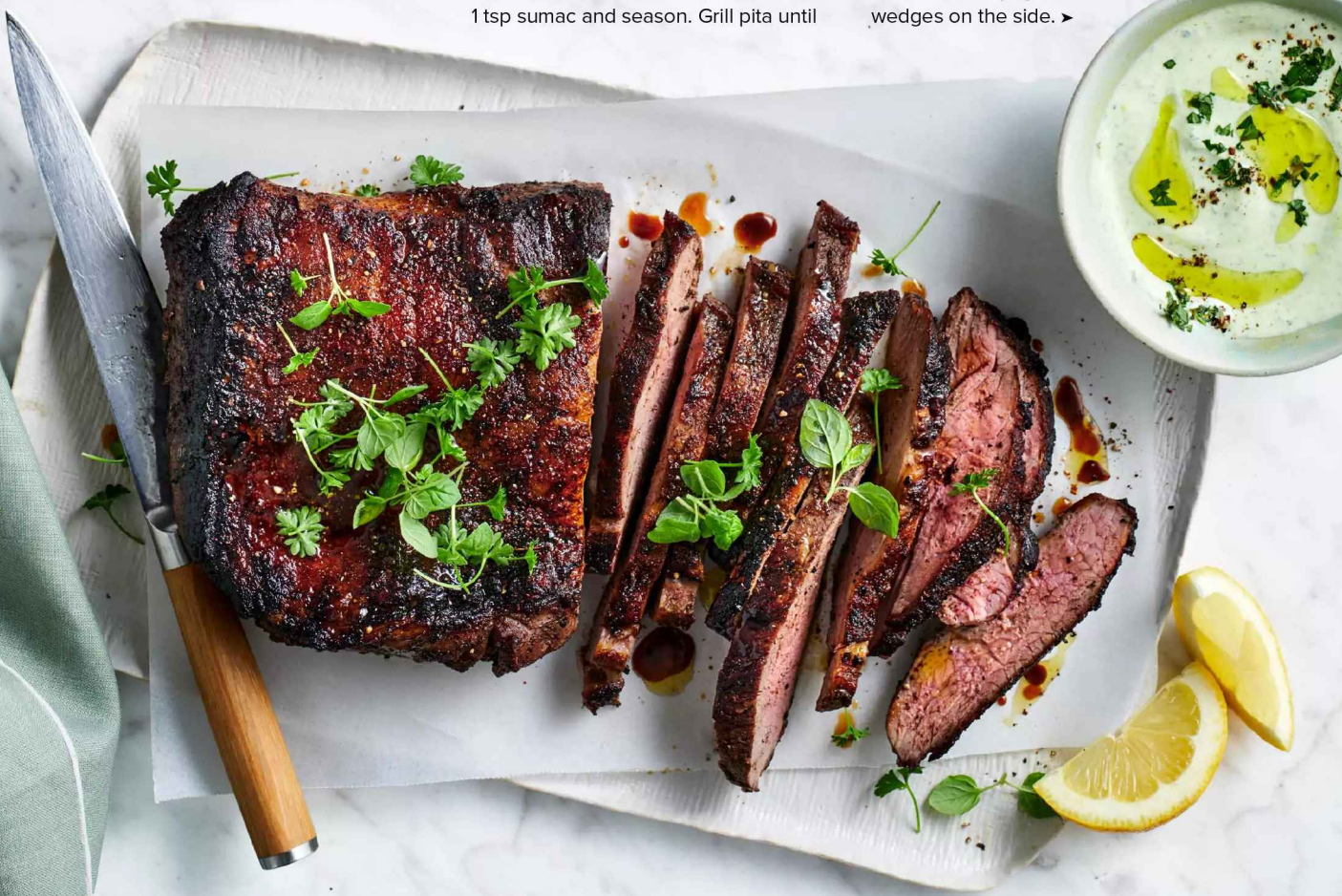
- MINT YOGHURT**
- ½ cup mint leaves
- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- 2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- Finely grated zest and juice of 1 lemon
- 250 gm Greek-style yoghurt

- 1 Combine garlic, spices and olive oil in a large bowl, add lamb and massage to coat. Set aside to marinate (15 minutes or 1 hour if time permits).
- 2 Heat a barbecue or lightly greased char-grill pan to medium-high. Drizzle lamb with little extra oil and season. Place on barbecue fat-side down and grill, turning every 10 minutes, until cooked to your liking (20-25 minutes for medium-rare). Transfer to a tray, cover loosely with foil and rest for 15 minutes.
- 3 For fattoush, return barbecue to high. Brush pita with 1 tbsp oil, rub with 1 tsp sumac and season. Grill pita until

charred and toasted (1-2 minutes each side). Remove from char-grill, and set aside to crisp. Place beans and peas in a bowl, drizzle with 1 tbsp oil, season, toss to coat, then grill, turning occasionally, until charred and tender (2-3 minutes). Transfer to a board to cool, then halve on an angle. Place garlic, lemon zest and juice, remaining 125ml olive oil and remaining sumac in a large bowl, season, then add beans, peas and remaining ingredients. Toss to combine. Crumble in pita just before serving.

4 For mint yoghurt, blend mint, garlic, olive oil, lemon zest, juice and 2 tbsp yoghurt in a high-speed blender until smooth and bright green. Transfer to a bowl, stir in remaining yoghurt and season.

5 Slice lamb across the grain. Serve lamb scattered micro herbs with fattoush, mint yoghurt and lemon wedges on the side. ►





DF

Coconut sponge puddings with mango and amaretto syrup

SERVES 4 // PREP 20 MINS // COOK 18 MINS (PLUS COOLING)

- 80 gm melted butter, plus extra for greasing
- 4 eggs, separated
- 40 gm (½ cup) desiccated coconut
- 60 ml (¼ cup) lime juice, plus lime cheeks to serve (optional)
- 70 gm (½ cup) self-raising flour
- 330 gm (1½ cups) caster sugar
- 2 270ml cans coconut milk, plus extra to serve (optional)
- 90 gm (¼ cup) honey
- 2 tbsp amaretto (we use Disaronno) icing sugar, for dusting
- 2 mangoes, cut into wedges, to serve

- 1** Preheat oven to 180°C fan-forced. Grease four, 600ml ovenproof ramekins (or bowls) and place in a deep-sided baking tray.
- 2** Blend butter, egg yolks, coconut, lime juice, flour, sugar and coconut milk in a blender until smooth. Transfer to a large bowl.
- 3** Whisk egg whites and a pinch of salt in the bowl of an electric mixer until soft peaks form (1-2 minutes), then fold into coconut mixture and divide evenly among ramekins.

- 4** Carefully pour boiling water into the baking tray to reach halfway up the sides of the ramekins. Bake puddings until lightly golden and just set (15-18 minutes).
- 5** Meanwhile, combine honey and 60ml (¼ cup) water in a small saucepan over medium heat. Bring to a simmer then remove from heat and stir in amaretto; set aside to cool slightly.
- 6** Dust puddings with icing sugar, top with mango and drizzle over honey and amaretto syrup. Serve with lime cheeks and extra coconut milk.

EVERYDAY

GF

Peach and raspberry fool with candied hazelnut

SERVES 4 // PREP 15 MINS // COOK 23 MINS
(PLUS COOLING)

40 gm hazelnuts
260 gm (1 cup) caster sugar
6 ripe peaches, halved
50 ml peach brandy (see note)
Juice of 1 orange and ½ lemon
500 gm mascarpone
300 ml thickened cream
55 gm (¼ cup) brown sugar
Scraped seeds of 1 vanilla bean
Raspberries, to serve

1 Preheat oven to 200°C fan-forced. Heat a frying pan over medium heat, add hazelnuts, and dry-roast until golden, then gradually scatter over 40gm sugar, mixing continuously, until sugar caramelises and coats the nuts (2-3 minutes). Transfer to a tray lined with baking paper to cool, then coarsely chop.

2 Scatter remaining sugar over the base of a roasting pan large enough to fit peaches snugly in a single layer. Add peaches, carefully toss to coat in sugar, then turn cut side up. Combine liqueur and juices in a jug, drizzle around peaches and roast, basting occasionally, until tender (18-20 minutes). Cool briefly, then set aside half the roast peaches and roasting liquid. Purée remaining roast peaches in a food processor and refrigerate to chill.

3 Cut remaining roast peaches into wedges. Whisk mascarpone, cream, sugar and vanilla in an electric mixer until medium peaks form. Fold through peach purée and divide among serving bowls. Top with remaining roast peaches and raspberries, drizzle with roasting liquid and serve scattered with candied hazelnuts.

Note If peach brandy isn't available, substitute Cointreau, brandy or golden rum. •



EXPLAINER

When fruit is at its seasonal best, a fool is one of the simplest yet most delicious desserts to make. A ripple of caramelised roasted peaches spiked with booze and fresh raspberries cuts through whipped mascarpone, while a scattering of candied hazelnuts adds crunch.

On-trend pistachio and in-season berries come together in this grown-up, make-ahead meal finale.

IN THE AUSTRALIAN SUMMER, A FROZEN DESSERT TICKS ALL THE BOXES FOR refreshment and nostalgia. This layered creation sees berries complemented by some very reliable sidekicks – basil and mint. “There’s also black pepper in the macerated berries for a little kick, and sweeter pink peppercorns in the crumb for a nice contrast to the creamy, fruity flavours,” says *Gourmet Traveller’s* senior food editor Maxwell Adey. While there are a few elements, the recipe is approachable, with one key sticking point: “It’s imperative to double-line your tin with baking paper to ensure the cake easily unmoulds,” he warns. The sorbet (“It’s loosely based on a Thomas Keller recipe and always delivers on texture,” says Adey) and dacquoise are handy base recipes to perfect. “The texture of a dacquoise survives freezing, and you can interchange hazelnuts or almonds in place of pistachio.”

SERVES 8-10 // PREP 1 HR 30 MINS // COOK 20 MINS (PLUS COOLING, INFUSING, FIRING, FREEZING)

- 1 tbsp orange juice
1 tbsp orange liqueur, such as
Grand Marnier
Baby basil and mint, to serve
PISTACHIO DACQUOISE
150 gm lightly roasted pistachios
100 gm icing sugar
1 tbsp plain flour
¼ tsp ground cardamom
4 egg whites
55 gm (¼ cup) caster sugar
20 gm melted butter
Finely grated zest of ½ orange
STRAWBERRY SORBET
200 gm caster sugar
50 gm liquid glucose
350 gm strawberries, hulled, coarsely
chopped
1 vanilla bean, split, seeds scraped
250 gm mascarpone
150 gm goat's cheese (chèvre; we use
Meredith Dairy)
2½ tbsp lemon juice
MACERATED BERRIES
500 gm strawberries, hulled, sliced
into rounds
75 gm (⅓ cup) caster sugar
50 ml orange liqueur, such as
Grand Marnier
Finely grated zest and juice of
1 lemon and ½ orange
250 gm raspberries
PINK PEPPERCORN CRUMB
75 gm (½ cup) roasted pistachios,
coarsely chopped
20 gm (⅓ cup) freeze-dried
raspberries, coarsely crushed
2 tbsp pink peppercorns, coarsely
crushed or to taste





1 For dacquoise, preheat oven to 160°C fan forced. Grease and line a 32cm x 22cm rectangular cake tin with baking paper. Process pistachios, icing sugar, flour and cardamom in a food processor until finely chopped. Whisk egg whites and a pinch of fine salt in an electric mixer until soft peaks form. Add caster sugar, 1 tbsp at a time, until sugar is dissolved and meringue is stiff and glossy. Transfer meringue to a large bowl, fold in pistachio mixture in 3 batches, then fold in butter and zest. Spoon into tin, smooth surface, then bake until golden and cooked through (15-18 minutes). Cool briefly (5 minutes). Loosen edges with a sharp knife. Invert onto a wire rack to cool completely.

2 Line an 11.5cm x 21.5cm (top measurement), 9.5cm x 19.5cm (base measurement), 7cm-deep loaf tin with two layers of baking paper. Trim 1-2mm off outer edges of cake, then using the loaf tin as a guide, cut cake into 3 even rectangles. Store cake in an airtight container until required. Discard offcuts.

3 For sorbet, bring sugar, glucose and 250ml water to a simmer in a small saucepan and cook, stirring, until sugar dissolves (2-3 minutes). Remove from heat, add strawberries, vanilla bean and seeds, stir to combine and stand to infuse (1 hour). Strain into a bowl set over an ice bath and stir until chilled (discard solids). Blend mascarpone, goat's cheese and strawberry syrup in a blender until smooth. Churn in an ice-cream machine according to

manufacturer's instructions, adding lemon juice in last 5 minutes. Working quickly, divide sorbet into 2 portions (about 375gm each) and transfer to the freezer to firm slightly (30 minutes).

4 Meanwhile, combine orange juice and liqueur in a bowl. Place smaller piece of cake in base of lined tin and brush with one-third of liqueur mixture. Place tin in freezer to chill (10 minutes).

5 Spoon one portion of sorbet over cake layer in loaf tin, smooth surface and place in freezer to firm slightly (20 minutes).

6 Place another cake layer on top, drizzle with one-third of liqueur mixture, spoon over remaining sorbet, smooth surface and return to freezer to firm slightly (20 minutes).

7 Place remaining cake layer on top, drizzle with remaining liqueur mixture, wrap in plastic wrap and freeze overnight to firm.

8 For macerated berries, toss strawberries, sugar, liqueur, zest, juice and ¼ tsp coarsely ground black peppercorns in a bowl to coat. Set aside, stirring occasionally, to macerate (15 minutes). Add raspberries just before serving.

9 For pink peppercorn crumb, combine ingredients in a small bowl.

10 Turn cake onto a chopping board. Working quickly, slice thickly and place on cold serving plates. Top with macerated berries; scatter with pink peppercorn crumb and baby herbs to serve. •





PHOTOGRAPHY **BEN DEARNLEY**
STYLING **VIVIEN WALSH**
RECIPES **TAMIKA O'NEILL**

Club tropicana

The sweet nectar of juicy, golden pineapples adds a tropical twist to these dishes made for alfresco feasting.



Granita Patio large resin
tray in Cream from HK
Living. All other props
stylist's own.

Pineapple granita
with yoghurt,
honey and thyme,
p94





Snapper and pineapple ceviche

SERVES 6 // PREP 15 MINS (PLUS MARINATING)

Bright and zesty, this ceviche teams pineapple with delicate snapper for a vibrant twist on the Mexican classic – the perfect dish to cool off at golden hour. Serve it alongside our Spicy Margarita (see recipe, right) for a pairing that sings of summer.

- 550 gm skinless saddle-tail snapper fillets, pin-boned, thinly sliced
- 200 gm pineapple, thinly shaved on a mandolin
- 1 red capsicum, finely diced
- 2 golden shallots, thinly sliced
- 1 jalapeño, seeds removed, finely chopped
- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- 1½ tsp ground cumin
- ½ tsp Aleppo pepper
- 125 ml (½ cup) each lemon and lime juice
- 1 tbsp fruity extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 avocado, finely diced
- Micro coriander, to serve

- 1 Place snapper, pineapple, capsicum, shallot, jalapeño, garlic, spices and citrus juices in a non-reactive bowl and toss to combine. Cover and refrigerate, stirring halfway through, to marinate (30 minutes; or until fish turns opaque).
- 2 Drain ceviche (discard liquid). Stir in olive oil. Season to taste.
- 3 Arrange ceviche on chilled plates. Top with avocado and micro coriander to serve.

Pineapple Spicy Margarita

MAKES 2 // PREP 5 MINS // COOK 5 MINS (PLUS STANDING, CHILLING)

This cocktail is summer in a glass. Laced with a touch of tropical sweetness, it's bold yet balanced, and on the right side of spicy – the perfect companion to salty snacks and sunset sessions.

- Lime wedge, for rubbing
- 165 ml (⅔ cup) tequila blanco
- 80 ml (⅓ cup) triple sec
- 125 ml (½ cup) lime juice
- Pineapple leaves, for garnishing
- SPICY PINEAPPLE AND JALAPEÑO SYRUP**
- 110 gm (½ cup) caster sugar
- 250 gm coarsely chopped pineapple
- 2 jalapeños, sliced
- LIME-CAYENNE SALT**
- ½ tsp cayenne pepper
- Finely grated zest of ½ lime

- 1 For spicy pineapple and jalapeño syrup, stir sugar and 125ml water in a small saucepan over medium heat until sugar dissolves. Add remaining

- ingredients and bring to a simmer. Simmer for 5 minutes. Remove from heat and stand to infuse (30 minutes). Strain syrup through a fine sieve into a sealable jar (discard solids) and refrigerate to chill (1 hour). Makes approximately 200ml.
- 2 For lime-cayenne salt, combine ingredients and 2 tsp salt flakes on a plate and set aside.
 - 3 Rub rim of chilled glasses with lime wedge, then dip into salt and set aside.
 - 4 Half fill a cocktail shaker with ice. Add tequila, triple sec, lime juice and 20ml pineapple-jalapeño syrup and shake vigorously for 30 seconds. Strain into glasses, garnish with pineapple leaves and serve straight up or on the rocks. ➤

CHA GIÒ

Vietnamese spring rolls with pineapple nước chấm

MAKES 25 // PREP 25 MINS // COOK 22 MINS (PLUS SOAKING)

You can't beat the crunch of a spring roll. Inspired by the Vietnamese classic, this version comes wrapped in layers of freshness – soft butter lettuce, fragrant herbs and a zingy nước chấm brightened with pineapple for a modern twist.

- 25 small spring roll wrappers
- Vegetable oil, for frying
- 1 butter lettuce, leaves separated
- 150 gm bean sprouts
- Mixed soft herbs such as Vietnamese mint, Thai basil, perilla (see note) and mint, to serve
- PORK FILLING**
- 20 gm dried wood-ear mushrooms
- 45 gm dried mung bean vermicelli noodles
- 450 gm minced pork
- 2 banana shallots, finely diced (see note)
- 75 gm carrot, finely grated
- 50 gm water chestnuts, diced
- 20 gm peeled ginger, finely grated
- 3 garlic cloves, crushed
- 1 egg white
- 2 tbsp fish sauce
- 3 tsp soy sauce
- ¼ tsp ground white pepper
- PINEAPPLE NƯỚC CHẤM**
- 1 garlic clove, chopped
- 3 birdseye chillies, chopped
- 90 gm (½ cup) diced pineapple
- 60 ml (¼ cup) lime juice
- 2 tbsp fish sauce
- 1 tbsp grated palm sugar

1 For pork filling, place mushrooms and vermicelli in separate bowls. Cover each with boiling water and set aside until softened (10 minutes for vermicelli noodles; 15 minutes for mushrooms). Drain vermicelli and using scissors, cut into 2cm lengths. Drain mushrooms, squeeze out excess water, finely chop

and transfer to a large bowl with the noodles. Add remaining ingredients and stir well to combine.

2 Place a spring roll wrapper on a work surface with a corner at the top (cover remaining wrappers with a damp tea towel). Spoon 2 tbsp of filling across centre. Brush edges with water, fold bottom of wrapper over filling, fold in sides, then roll to enclose. Place on a large tray and cover with a damp tea towel. Repeat with remaining wrappers and filling. Refrigerate until required.

3 For pineapple nước chấm, pound garlic, two-thirds chillies and ¼ tsp sea salt flakes in a mortar and pestle to a fine paste. Add half the pineapple and pound to extract juices. Transfer to a bowl and stir in remaining ingredients to combine. Set aside.

4 To cook spring rolls, half fill a large saucepan with oil and place over medium heat until oil reaches 170°C on a deep-frying thermometer. Deep-fry spring rolls, in batches, turning occasionally, until golden and cooked through (5-6 minutes; be careful as hot oil will spit). Drain on paper towel.

5 Arrange spring rolls, bean sprouts and herbs on a large platter with lettuce leaves for wrapping. Serve with pineapple nước chấm for dipping.

Note Perilla leaves are available from select Asian grocers. ▶







Spiced crisp pork belly with pineapple achcharu and Hawaiian buns

SERVES 4-6 // PREP 40 MINS // COOK 2 HRS 40 MINS (PLUS DRYING OUT, MARINATING, STANDING, PROVING)

A collision of island cuisines, this Filipino-inspired spiced pork belly meets a tangy pineapple achcharu, a vibrant Sri Lankan pickled relish that brightens the rich meat. Sandwiched between soft Hawaiian buns – a sweet, Portuguese bread brought to Hawaii in the 1800s – each bite is better than the last (and gloriously messy).

- 1.2 kg piece boneless pork belly, skin on, fat scored
- 2 tbsp annatto seeds (see note)
- 1 tbsp urfa chilli (see note)
- 2 tsp each fennel seeds and pink peppercorns
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- 2 tbsp pineapple juice
- 2 tsp neutral-flavoured oil
- 1 cup (firmly packed) mint, to serve
- PINEAPPLE ACHCHARU**
- 310 ml (1¼ cups) apple cider vinegar
- 55 gm (¼ cup) sugar
- 450 gm pineapple, thinly sliced on a mandolin
- 2 tsp Aleppo pepper (see note)
- 1 tsp pink peppercorns
- HAWAIIAN BUNS**
- 300 gm (2 cup) plain flour
- 55 gm (¼ cup) caster sugar
- 1½ tsp dried yeast
- 2 eggs, plus 1 egg beaten for eggwash
- 60 ml (¼ cup) each milk and concentrated pineapple juice
- 40 gm melted unsalted butter, plus 20gm extra for brushing

- 1 Place pork skin-side up on a tray lined with baking paper and refrigerate uncovered overnight to dry out.
- 2 Dry-roast spices in a small frying pan until fragrant (30 seconds). Crush with a mortar and pestle or spice grinder, transfer to a bowl and stir in pineapple juice, 1 tsp oil and 1 tsp salt flakes to form a paste. Rub over flesh

side of pork belly. Return pork skin-side up to tray; refrigerate uncovered to marinate (2 hours).

3 Meanwhile, for pineapple achcharu, bring vinegar, sugar, 185ml water and 3½ tsp salt flakes to a simmer in a small saucepan over medium heat. Stir until sugar dissolves, then remove from heat and stand to cool slightly (10 minutes). Place pineapple, Aleppo and peppercorns in a bowl. Pour over pickling liquid, cool completely to room temperature, then cover and refrigerate to cool and pickle (1 hour). Achcharu will keep refrigerated for 1 week.

4 For Hawaiian buns, combine dry ingredients and 1 tsp salt flakes in an electric mixer with the dough hook attached. Whisk eggs, milk, pineapple juice and butter in a jug, then add to mixer. Mix on low speed until a shaggy dough forms. Increase speed to medium and knead until dough is smooth and elastic. Transfer to an oiled bowl, cover with a damp tea towel and set aside until doubled in size (1 hour). Knock back dough, knead until smooth, divide into nine even portions and roll into balls. Place in a lightly oiled 20cm-diameter cake tin, leaving space between each to expand, cover with a damp tea towel and set aside until doubled in size (1 hour). Preheat oven to 180°C fan-forced. Brush buns with eggwash, then transfer to oven and bake until cooked through and golden (18-20 minutes). Remove from oven,

brush with extra warm butter and stand for 5 minutes, then remove from tin and cool on a wire rack.

5 Meanwhile, bring pork belly to room temperature (1 hour).

6 Increase oven to 240°C fan-forced. Place pork in a roasting pan large enough to fit pork snugly. Brush skin with remaining 1 tsp oil, scatter over 1 tbsp salt flakes and rub into cuts. Transfer pork to oven and roast until crackling begins to form (30 minutes). Reduce temperature to 150°C fan-forced and roast until very tender (1 hour and 45 minutes). Remove pork from the oven and set aside to rest (15 minutes).

7 Wrap buns in aluminium foil and place in oven to warm through (10-15 minutes).

8 Transfer pork to a board and slice. Strain pan juices into a large frying pan and warm over low heat. Remove from heat, add pork slices and turn to coat. Serve sliced pork and pineapple achcharu in warm Hawaiian buns with mint.

Note Annatto seeds, used in Caribbean cooking with a slightly sweet and peppery flavour, are available from Asian grocers or online. Urfa chilli or urfa biber, a smoky, mild dried Turkish pepper, is available from Turkish grocers or online. Aleppo pepper, a ground mild chilli, is available from Turkish grocers and online. If unavailable, substitute another mild chilli powder. ➤



SUON BO NUONG

Vietnamese beef short ribs with pineapple salsa and vermicelli salad

SERVES 4 // PREP 30 MINS // COOK 1 HR 35 MINS (PLUS MARINATING, DRYING)

Melt-in-your-mouth beef ribs glisten with a sticky soy glaze while a vibrant pineapple salsa refreshes, cutting through the savoury richness. A delicate vermicelli salad bursting with aromatic herbs and the crunch of bean sprouts is its perfect foil.

- 1 tbsp vegetable oil
- 200 gm dried vermicelli
- 2 Lebanese cucumbers, cut into julienne
- 1½ cups (loosely packed) mixed soft herbs, such as coriander, mint, Vietnamese mint, coriander and Thai basil

MARINATED BEEF RIBS

- 2 lemongrass stalks (white part only), thinly sliced
- 2 garlic cloves, chopped
- 1½ tsp mixed peppercorns
- 1 tsp Chinese five-spice
- 2 tbsp vegetable oil
- 4 beef short ribs (about 1.2kg), halved through bone (see note)

BRAISING STOCK

- 200 gm diced pineapple
- 2 golden shallots, chopped
- 3 garlic cloves, chopped
- 80 ml (⅓ cup) each Asian barbecue sauce and tomato sauce
- 80 ml (⅓ cup) each Shaoxing wine and light soy sauce
- 300 ml beef stock
- 25 gm ginger, sliced
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 3 star anise

PINEAPPLE SALSA

- 1½ tbsp lime juice
- 1 tsp each grated palm sugar and fish sauce
- 2 cups (300gm) diced pineapple
- 1 long red chilli, thinly sliced
- STICKY SOY GLAZE
- 1 long red chilli, finely chopped
- 80 ml (⅓ cup) light soy sauce
- 60 ml (¼ cup) each honey and brown sugar
- 1½ tbsp finely grated lemongrass, white part only

1 For marinated beef ribs, pound lemongrass, garlic, peppercorns and 1 tsp salt flakes with a mortar and pestle to form a coarse paste. Stir in Chinese five-spice and oil. Transfer to a bowl with ribs and massage to coat. Cover and refrigerate to marinate (2 hours or overnight).

2 Preheat oven to 140°C fan-forced. Meanwhile, for braising stock, blend all ingredients except ginger and spices in a blender until smooth. Pour into a large casserole, then add remaining ingredients and set aside.

3 Heat vegetable oil in a large frying pan over high heat. Add ribs and cook, in batches, turning occasionally, until

browned (3–4 minutes each side).

Transfer ribs to braising stock and bring to a simmer over high heat. Cover with a tight-fitting lid or 2 layers of aluminium foil and braise in oven until meat is very tender but remains on bone (1 hour 20 minutes). Remove ribs with a slotted spoon and place on an oven tray to dry (30 minutes). Discard braising stock. Beef ribs can be prepared 2 days in advance.

4 Soak vermicelli in boiling water for 5 minutes, then drain, rinse under cold running water, drain again. Set aside in a bowl.

5 Meanwhile, for pineapple salsa, whisk lime juice, palm sugar and fish sauce in a bowl until sugar dissolves, then add remaining ingredients and toss to combine. Set aside.

6 For sticky soy glaze, stir ingredients in a large frying pan over medium heat until combined. Add ribs and cook, turning to coat in glaze, until caramelised. Remove from the heat. Transfer ribs to a large serving platter and drizzle with extra glaze. Arrange vermicelli, cucumber, herbs and salsa on platter with ribs to serve.

Note Ask your butcher to prepare the short ribs for you.

Pineapple granita with yoghurt, honey and thyme

SERVES 4 // PREP 15 MINS // COOK 25 MINS (PLUS FREEZING, COOLING)

This granita is downright genius. Just freeze ripe pineapple chunks and grate them to serve. Pictured p87

- 320 gm ripe pineapple, peeled, cored and cut into 5cm pieces
- 420 gm (1½ cups) Greek-style yoghurt
- 120 gm (⅓ cup) bush honey
- ½ bunch thyme sprigs with flowers

ALMOND CRUNCH

- 80 ml (⅓ cup) condensed milk
- 1 tsp vanilla bean paste
- ½ tsp ground cardamom

- 80 gm (1 cup) flaked almonds

GRILLED PINEAPPLE

- 2 tsp walnut oil
- 400 gm pineapple, cut into 1cm-thick rounds, core removed
- 1 tbsp brown sugar

1 Place pineapple in a large zip-lock bag and freeze overnight.

2 For almond crunch, preheat oven to 160°C fan-forced. Place all ingredients except almonds in a small saucepan. Add ½ tsp salt flakes and place over medium heat. Cook until mixture just begins to simmer. Remove from heat, stir in almonds and spread out in an even layer on a baking tray lined with baking paper. Bake until golden (18–20 minutes). Set aside to cool completely, then break into shards. Can be stored in an airtight container for up to 1 week.

3 For grilled pineapple, heat a barbecue or char-grill pan to high. Brush pan with walnut oil. Toss pineapple and sugar in a bowl to coat. Char-grill pineapple, turning occasionally, until caramelised (5 minutes). Transfer to a plate to cool.

4 Spoon yoghurt into chilled serving bowls. Top with grilled pineapple and shards of almond crunch. Drizzle with a little honey and scatter with thyme. Finely grate frozen pineapple over to serve. •



Grilled cos with
anchovies, capers
and chilli, p104

Charred corn with
Espelette butter
and Manchego,
p100

Grilled bavette
with charred
onions and
romesco, p98

PHOTOGRAPHY JOHN PAUL URIZAR
STYLING OLIVIA BLACKMORE
FOOD PREPARATION REBECCA LYALL

TURN UP THE HEAT

Hot summer days call for breezy barbecue recipes from chef **LENNOX HASTIE**.

FLAMES HAVE ALWAYS FASCINATED LENNOX HASTIE, CHEF-OWNER of Firedoor and Gildas, in Sydney. "Cooking over fire forces me to slow down, to listen to the ingredients, and to reconnect with the world around me," he says. While barbecuing over gas can't achieve quite the same results, Hastie concedes it's "a good starting point", particularly for home cooks, and has adapted his recipes accordingly. "I chose dishes that are perfect for long summer days and warm nights. I also took inspiration from my time in northern Spain, where seafood, meat, and vegetables are grilled in equal measure."



Barbecued clams with butter beans and jamón

SERVES 4 AS A STARTER // PREP 20 MINS // COOK 15 MINS (PLUS SOAKING, STANDING)

"Clams pop open over the heat of the grill, releasing their briny liquor," says Hastie. "Combined with white beans and jamón, they become something grounding and comforting and an ideal marriage of surf 'n' turf."

- 2 thick slices sourdough bread
- Extra-virgin olive oil, for drizzling
- 1 kg clams, soaked in cold water for 20 minutes
- 400 gm can butter beans, drained and rinsed
- ¼ large preserved lemon, rinsed, rind finely chopped
- ½ cup (loosely packed) parsley, chopped
- 50 gm jamón, diced
- JAMÓN STOCK**
- 1 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 golden shallot, sliced
- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- 50 gm jamón, chopped
- 500 ml (2 cups) chicken stock

- 1 For jamón stock, heat olive oil in a saucepan over medium-high heat. Add shallot and sauté until softened (3-4 minutes). Add garlic and jamón and sauté until golden (2-3 minutes). Add chicken stock, bring to a simmer, then remove from heat and stand to infuse (20 minutes). Strain into a large deep frying pan and set aside (discard solids).
- 2 Heat a hooded barbecue or lightly greased char-grill over high heat. Brush bread slices with a little olive oil, season and grill, turning occasionally, until slightly charred and toasted (3 minutes). Remove from grill, set aside to cool, then coarsely tear.

- 3 Reduce barbecue to medium-high. Drizzle vongole with a little olive oil, place on grill, cover with an upturned bowl and grill until opened (5-6 minutes).
- 4 Meanwhile, add beans to pan with jamón stock and bring to a gentle simmer over medium heat. Carefully remove clams from barbecue (be careful to ensure you retain clam juices) and transfer to pan. Stir in preserved lemon and parsley. Remove from heat and transfer to a large serving dish. Top with charred bread and jamón to serve.

Grilled bavette with charred onions and romesco

SERVES 4 AS A SIDE // PREP 30 MINS // COOK 1HR 5 MINS (PLUS STANDING)

"Bavette is an incredible cut of beef that rewards high heat and attention," says Hastie. "With its open texture, it develops a deep crust, as its intramuscular fats render and flare on the grill, creating a magical flavour." Pictured p96

- 4 whole unpeeled red onions
- 1 kg bavette steak, at room temperature
- Extra-virgin olive oil, for drizzling
- ROMESCO**
- 2 red bullhorn peppers
- 3 whole unpeeled garlic cloves
- Extra-virgin olive oil, for drizzling, plus 100ml extra
- 100 gm roasted blanched almonds
- 2 tbsp red wine vinegar
- 1 tsp ñora pepper paste (see note)

1 For romesco, heat a barbecue or lightly greased char-grill to high. Drizzle peppers and garlic with a little olive oil, toss to coat and season. Grill peppers and garlic, turning occasionally, until blackened all over (4-5 minutes for garlic; 15-20 minutes for peppers). Transfer to a large bowl, cover with a plate and stand to cool slightly and soften (20 minutes). Peel peppers

- (discard skins and membrane; reserve seeds if you like it spicy), then coarsely chop. Squeeze garlic from its skin into a blender, add charred capsicum, extra oil and remaining ingredients; blend until smooth and season. Set aside until required. Romesco can be made 3 days ahead and refrigerated in an airtight container.
- 2 Return barbecue to high. Grill onions, turning occasionally, until charred and blackened all over (25-30 minutes). Transfer to a bowl, cover with a plate and allow to steam (15 minutes). Carefully unwrap onions, peel away the charred exterior, then halve onion hearts and set aside.
- 3 Drizzle steak with a little oil and season. Place steak on barbecue, fat-side down and using tongs, drag across grill two to three times to lightly render fat and grease grill plate. Char-grill steak, turning occasionally,

until browned and cooked to your liking (6-8 minutes for medium-rare). Remove from grill and set aside to rest (6-8 minutes).

4 While steak is resting, drizzle onion hearts with a little oil and char-grill cut-side down, until caramelised (1-2 minutes). Remove from grill; season.

5 Cut steak across the grain into 4mm slices, then arrange on a serving platter with charred onion hearts and romesco on the side.

Note Ñora pepper paste, made from dried round Spanish peppers with a slightly sweet and smoky flavour, is available from select Spanish delicatessens or online. If unavailable, substitute 1 whole dried ancho chilli soaked in cold water for 15 minutes to soften, then drained. ►



Chistorra with talo and warm honey

MAKES 8 // PREP 40 MINS // COOK 55 MINS (PLUS STANDING)

"In the Basque markets, the scent of corn and chistorra fills the air," says Hastie. "Talo is a humble flatbread that comes alive on a hot grill, blistered and warm. The combination of chistorra or chorizo, caramelised onions and peppers, and a drizzle of honey make it a celebration of fire and street food, best eaten with your hands."

2½ tbsp extra-virgin olive oil

1 onion, sliced

1 garlic clove, finely chopped

1 each green and red capsicum, thinly sliced

8 fresh chistorra sausages (we use La Boqueria; see note)

Micro parsley, to serve

80 ml (⅓ cup) honey, warmed to serve
TALO FLATBREAD DOUGH

1 tsp dried yeast

275 gm plain flour

140 gm harina de maíz (see note)

1¼ tsp pimentón (see note)

1 For talo flatbread, mix yeast and 290ml warm water in jug to combine and stand until frothy (10 minutes). Combine flour, maíz, pimentón, and 2¼ tsp salt flakes in an electric mixer fitted with a dough hook. Mix on low speed to combine, then add yeast mixture until a soft, sticky dough forms (adding a little more water, if

necessary). Increase speed to medium and knead until dough is smooth and elastic (8 minutes). Cover with a damp tea towel and stand at room temperature to prove and doubled in size (40-50 minutes).

2 Meanwhile, heat olive oil in a frying pan over medium heat. Add onion and sauté until softened and lightly caramelised (6-8 minutes). Add garlic and sauté until fragrant (1-2 minutes). Add capsicum and sauté until mixture is caramelised (15-16 minutes). Transfer to a bowl, season and set aside.

3 Knock back dough, divide into 8 portions and form each piece into a ball. Roll each ball on a lightly floured surface to 2mm-thick 20cm round, and layer between pieces of baking paper to avoid drying out.

4 Heat a barbecue or char-grill pan to high. Grill sausages, turning often, until browned and cooked through (10 minutes). Transfer to a plate and

cover with aluminium foil, while you grill flatbread.

5 Heat a plancha or cast-iron frying pan on a barbecue or stove until very hot (see note). Char flatbreads in a dry pan, in batches, until blistered and cooked through (1-2 minutes each side). Wrap flatbreads in a clean towel to keep warm.

6 Serve warm talo flatbreads with chistorra, caramelised onion mixture, micro parsley and honey for drizzling.

Note Chistorra, a fast-cured, coiled pork sausage from Spain's Basque region, is available from select grocers. If unavailable, substitute fresh chorizo. Harina de maíz (also known as masa harina) is a white corn flour. Pimentón, a Spanish sweet and smoked paprika, is available at select delicatessens or online. A plancha is a flat metal grill plate popular in Spain.

Charred corn with Espelette butter and Manchego

SERVES 4 AS A SIDE // PREP 15 MINS // COOK 17 MINS (PLUS SOAKING)

"Corn over fire is pure joy," says Hastie. "The kernels pop and caramelise, each one bursting with smoky sweetness. I brush the cobs with butter, Espelette pepper, and lemon, letting it melt and drip as the corn is turned over the grill. A snowfall of sharp Manchego finishes it, clinging to the hot buttered surface. It's simple, messy, and utterly addictive and best eaten outdoors with your hands, with the scent of smoke still in the air." Pictured p96

4 corn cobs

Finely chopped chives and finely grated Manchego, to serve
ESEPELETTE BUTTER

180 gm softened unsalted butter

1 tsp piment d'Espelette (see note)
Finely grated zest of juice of ½ lemon

1 Peel back husks of corn and remove silk. Pull husks back over

to cover corn, then soak in a large bowl of cold water for 20 minutes to prevent scorching.

2 For Espelette butter, stir ingredients in a bowl to combine, season and set aside.

3 Drain corn. Heat a barbecue or lightly greased char-grill pan to medium-high. Grill corn, turning occasionally, for 10 minutes. Set aside to cool slightly, then peel back husk

and tie with string to secure. Brush with a little Espelette butter and grill, turning, basting with butter until charred all over (10-12 minutes). Remove from grill and while hot, brush with remaining butter. Serve hot, scattered with chives and Manchego.

Note Piment d'Espelette, a French dried flaked chilli, is available from Herbie's Spices (herbies.com.au). ➤







Grilled sardines on pan con tomate

SERVES 4 AS A STARTER // PREP 10 MINS // COOK 6 MINS

"Few things capture the rhythm of a Spanish summer like sardines on the grill," says Hastie. "The skin blisters and the oily fat of the fish takes on the smoke beautifully. The ripe acidity of tomatoes and garlic smashed onto grilled bread make it the best open sandwich you'll have this summer."

- 8** thick slices ciabatta-style bread
- 125 ml (½ cup)** fruity extra-virgin olive oil, for drizzling
- 1** garlic clove
- 2** large ripe tomatoes, halved
- 8** fresh sardines, cleaned, scaled, gutted, butterflied
- Thinly peeled zest of **1** lemon
- Chopped parsley, to serve

1 Heat a barbecue or lightly greased char-grill pan to high. Brush bread with a little olive oil and grill until toasted and slightly charred (2 minutes each side).

2 Cut garlic clove in half and rub on one side of toast. Rub tomatoes over bread so pulp breaks down into the bread. Drizzle with a little oil and season with salt flakes.

3 Return barbecue to high. Drizzle sardines with a little oil, season and grill, skin side down, until skin blisters and fish is just cooked through (1-2 minutes).

4 Arrange slices of pan con tomate on a large serving platter, then place one grilled sardine on top of each. Drizzle with extra olive oil and scatter with lemon zest and parsley to serve.

Octopus with braised chickpeas and sobrasada

SERVES 4-6 AS A STARTER // PREP 25 MINS // COOK 20 MINS (PLUS MARINATING)

"Octopus loves the intensity of fire, caramelising and curling on the grill," says Hastie. "I like to serve it over chickpeas warmed with cumin, fennel, preserved lemon and a spoonful of spicy sobrasada resulting in a bright vibrant earthiness."

- 2** octopus (about 400gm each), head removed, tentacles separated
- 1** tbsp pimentón (see note)
- Finely grated zest and juice of **½** lemon, plus wedges to serve
- 70** ml extra-virgin olive oil, plus extra for drizzling
- 2** small fennel, cut into wedges, fennel fronds reserved
- 400** gm can chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 125** ml (½ cup) chicken stock
- ¼** large preserved lemon, rinsed, rind finely chopped
- ½** tsp dry-roasted cumin seeds and fennel seeds, coarsely crushed
- 50** gm sobrasada (see note)
- 1** cup (loosely packed) parsley, coarsely chopped

1 Rinse and dry octopus tentacles well. Transfer to a bowl with pimentón, lemon zest, juice and 30ml olive oil and mix well to coat. Stand to marinate (30-40 minutes).

2 Meanwhile, heat a barbecue or lightly greased char-grill to high. Drizzle fennel wedges with a little oil and grill until golden and charred on edges (4-5 minutes each side). Remove from grill, season and set aside.

3 Place chickpeas, stock, preserved lemon and spices in a small saucepan over medium heat. Cook, stirring, until fragrant (2 minutes). Add sobrasada and stir until rendered (30 seconds). Remove from heat.

4 Season octopus, then grill, in batches, until charred tender

(2-3 minutes each side). Remove from grill, season lightly and set aside to rest (2 minutes).

5 Meanwhile, reheat chickpea mixture over low heat until hot (2 minutes), then stir through parsley. Spoon into a serving dish, arrange octopus and charred fennel on top, scatter with fennel fronds, drizzle with extra olive oil and serve with lemon wedges on the side.

Note Pimentón, a Spanish sweet and smoked paprika, is available at select delicatessens or online. Sobrasada is a soft Spanish cured sausage flavoured with paprika and spices. If unavailable, substitute soft fresh chorizo, casing removed. ➤



Whole flounder with pil-pil and capers

SERVES 4 AS A SIDE // PREP 20 MINS // COOK 20 MINS (PLUS STANDING)

“Grilling a whole fish over fire is one of life’s quiet pleasures,” says Hastie. “The flounder’s delicate flesh takes on the heat slowly, the skin crisping while the meat within steams in its own juices. Once rested, I pour over a light emulsion or classic Basque pil-pil of warm olive oil scented with garlic and chilli. A scattering of capers, parsley, and lemon brings it all together.”

- 2 whole flounder (about 600gm each), scaled and gutted
- 130 ml fruity extra-virgin olive oil, plus extra for greasing
- 2 tbsp white wine
- Finely grated zest and juice of ½ lemon, plus lemon wedges to serve
- 2 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
- ½ long red chilli, thinly sliced
- 1 tbsp drained baby capers in brine
- ½ cup (loosely packed) parsley

- 1 Pat fish dry with paper towel and bring to room temperature (30 minutes). Rub fish with 2 tsp olive oil and season with salt flakes.
- 2 Set up a charcoal barbecue for

direct grilling (or barbecue to medium-high; see note). Once coals die down to medium-high heat, place fish in a lightly greased fish basket and grill, turning, until charred and flesh is just cooked (10-15 minutes). Transfer fish to a large chopping board and set aside to rest (5-7 minutes).

- 3 With a sharp knife or scissors, cut along the lateral line (the seam that runs down the middle of the fish). Using a spatula, push the flesh away from spine and gently lift off the top fillet on each side to open fish. Carefully ease spine out in one piece, if possible (this makes serving easier as all the flesh lifts away cleanly).

Season fish and pour white wine and lemon zest and juice over the head. Arrange fish fillets and head on a deep-sided serving platter to reform the whole fish shape for serving. Set aside.

- 4 Combine garlic, chilli, capers and remaining 120ml olive oil in a small saucepan and place over medium heat. Cook, stirring, until aromatics are crisp (5-7 minutes). Remove from heat. Carefully strain over whole fish, scatter with parsley and fried aromatics. Serve with lemon wedges on the side.

Note Cooking over charcoal adds depth of flavour; alternatively, grill the flounder on a hooded barbecue.

Grilled cos with anchovies, capers and chilli

SERVES 4 AS A SIDE // PREP 20 MINS // COOK 10 MINS (PLUS STANDING)

“There’s a beauty in grilling something as simple as lettuce,” says Hastie. “The cos transforms, lightly charred and smoky while the heart remains tender. Dressed with anchovies, garlic, lemon, capers, and chilli, it brings new meaning to salads.” Pictured p96

- 20 gm capers, rinsed
- 1 garlic clove, thinly sliced
- ½ long red chilli, thinly sliced
- 1 rosemary sprig
- 100 ml extra-virgin olive oil
- 4 baby cos, stem trimmed, halved lengthways
- Finely grated zest of 1 lemon
- 12 Cantabrian anchovies in oil, halved lengthways

- ½ cup (loosely packed) parsley, finely chopped
- Charred lemon halves, to serve

- 1 Combine capers, garlic, chilli, rosemary and 2 tbsp olive oil in a small frying pan over low heat and cook, stirring occasionally, until fragrant and garlic is crisp (3 minutes). Remove from heat and stand to infuse (20 minutes); discard rosemary.

- 2 Heat a barbecue or lightly greased char-grill pan to high. Brush cos halves with remaining olive oil and char-grill until charred and tender (1-2 minutes each side). Remove from heat, season and scatter with lemon zest.

- 3 Arrange cos on a serving platter. Top with anchovies, drizzle with caper-garlic oil and scatter with parsley. Serve with charred lemon halves on the side. ●



PHOTOGRAPHY DAVID LOFTUS

FAMILY TIES

NAT THAIPUN shares her favourite childhood recipes and her rich culinary heritage in her cookbook, *Thai: Anywhere and Everywhere*.



THIS IS A COLLECTION OF THE dishes that have shaped me, with memories from home and the people who've helped me become the cook I am today. It's an ode to Thai food and the culture that feeds my soul.

In Thailand, some of the dishes my parents and grandparents grew up with are quietly fading away. It's not just that they're being forgotten because of the popularity of certain Thai dishes we see everywhere – it runs deeper than that.

My dream is to bring these forgotten traditions into the spotlight, not just to preserve the recipes but to share the wonder I feel when I uncover an old technique or flavour combination that's been hiding in plain sight. There's an entire history to unpack in each bite – I'm excited to share that journey with you.

GOONG OB WOON SEN

Baked glass noodles with prawns

SERVES 2-3 // PREP 15 MINS // COOK 15 MINS

"This dish is traditionally cooked in a clay pot, infusing the glass noodles and prawns with aromatic spices and herbs, but it can also easily be prepared in any large pot or pan with a lid," says Thaipun. "The glass noodles absorb the broth, taking on a deliciously savoury flavour while remaining springy and tender. Often enjoyed with a side of chilli sauce, this dish is a comforting yet flavourful Thai favourite."

- 200 gm glass noodles (mung bean noodles)
- 1 tbsp oyster sauce
- 1 tbsp soy sauce
- ½ tbsp fish sauce
- 1 tsp sugar
- ¼ tsp white pepper
- 2 tbsp vegetable oil
- 4 garlic cloves, crushed
- 2½ cm (1 in) piece fresh ginger, cut into julienne

- 3 coriander roots and stems, lightly bruised
- 125 ml (½ cup) chicken or vegetable stock
- 200 gm large uncooked prawns, peeled and deveined (tails intact for presentation if desired)
- Small handful of coriander leaves, for garnishing
- Sliced spring onions, for garnishing

- 1 Soak the noodles in warm water for 10 minutes, then drain and toss with the oyster sauce, soy sauce, fish sauce, sugar and white pepper. Set aside to absorb the flavours.
- 2 Heat the oil in a clay pot or large

saucepan with a lid over a medium heat. Add the garlic, ginger and coriander roots and stems and stir until aromatic, about 1-2 minutes.

3 Spread the marinated glass noodles over the aromatic mixture in the pot. Pour in the stock and gently toss the noodles to coat evenly.

4 Arrange the prawns on top of the noodles, cover the pot with a lid and cook on a low heat for 5-7 minutes or until the prawns are cooked through and the noodles have absorbed most of the liquid.

5 Transfer the noodles and prawns to a serving plate. Garnish with coriander leaves and spring onions. ►





KHUA KLING

Southern Thai dry curry pork stir-fry

SERVES 4-6 // PREP 20 MINS // COOK 30 MINS

"This dry curry stir-fry packs a punch, its fragrant spices and southern-style curry paste giving a signature kick," says Thaipun. "Made with minced meat, usually pork or beef, it's also one of my dad's favourites – he grew up in southern Thailand, so for him it's a taste of home, the kind of thing he'd have with a big bowl of rice, savouring every bite. Characteristically dry, fiery and intensely aromatic, with the fragrant curry paste clinging to the meat, khua kling is often served with fresh vegetables to counterbalance its heat. I love it too, but it definitely makes me sweat!"

- 1 tbsp vegetable oil
- 400 gm minced pork
- 4 makrut lime leaves, finely sliced
- 1 tbsp fish sauce
- 1 tsp caster sugar
- Sliced cucumber, sliced cabbage, green beans and thinly sliced birdseye chillies, to serve
- CURRY PASTE**
- 3 dried red chillies, soaked in warm water for 10 minutes
- 2 red shallots, finely chopped
- 2 lemongrass stalks, finely sliced
- 3 garlic cloves
- 1 tsp chopped turmeric (or ½ tsp ground turmeric)
- 1 tsp shrimp paste

1 For curry paste, drain the chillies and pat them dry. In a mortar and pestle or food processor, pound or process ingredients into a smooth paste. If necessary, add a little water to assist with blending.

2 Heat the oil in a large frying pan over a medium heat. Add the curry paste and stir-fry for 3-5 minutes until fragrant and the oil begins to separate.

3 Increase the heat slightly and add the pork to the pan. Stir well to coat in the paste and cook until the pork is browned, around 10-12 minutes. Keep stirring to ensure the paste doesn't stick to the pan.

4 Add the makrut lime leaves, fish sauce and sugar. Stir and cook for a further 5-10 minutes until the curry is dry and the pork is well coated. Adjust the seasoning with more fish sauce or sugar to taste.

5 Garnish with the sliced chillies and serve hot accompanied by cucumber, cabbage and green beans to balance the dish's spice, providing a refreshing contrast.



TOD MUN PLA

Fish cakes

SERVES 4 // PREP 15 MINS // COOK 10 MINS

“This popular Thai street food is known for its fragrant blend of fish, red curry paste and makrut lime leaves,” says Thaipun. “Crisp on the outside with a tender, flavourful interior, fish cakes are commonly served with nam jim gai and a side of ajad pickles. It’s also a good way to use up any fish leftovers.”

- 300 gm white fish fillets (such as cod, snapper or tilapia; see note), coarsely chopped
- 2 tbsp nam prik gaeng daeng (red curry paste)
- 1 egg
- 1 tbsp fish sauce
- 2 tsp sugar
- 5 makrut lime leaves, finely sliced
- 6 green beans, finely chopped
- Vegetable oil, for shallow-frying
- DIPPING SAUCE**
- 1 tbsp rice vinegar
- 2 tsp caster sugar
- 2 tbsp nam jim gai (sweet chilli sauce)
- 1 small Lebanese cucumber, finely diced
- 1 long red chilli, finely chopped
- 1 tbsp roasted peanuts, crushed

1 For fish cakes, process fish fillets in a food processor until smooth. Add red curry paste, egg, fish sauce and sugar; process until all the ingredients are well combined. Transfer mixture to a bowl and fold in the makrut lime leaves and beans. If the mixture is too soft, add a tablespoon of cornflour to help bind it (see note).

2 To shape fish cakes, wet your hands slightly to prevent sticking and shape the fish mixture into small patties about 5cm in diameter.

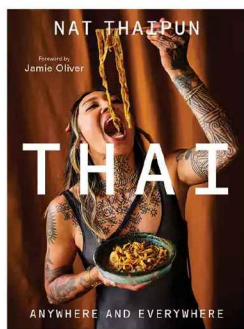
3 Heat 1cm vegetable oil in a large frying pan over a medium heat. Fry the patties in batches, cooking each side for 3-4 minutes or until golden brown and crisp (see note). Drain on paper towel while you cook the rest of the patties.

4 For dipping sauce, in a small bowl, mix the rice vinegar, sugar and sweet chilli sauce with about a tablespoon of water until the sugar dissolves. Add the cucumber, chilli and peanuts.

5 Arrange the hot fish cakes on a platter and serve immediately with the dipping sauce.

Note Choose a firm white fish that holds its shape well once blended (ask your fishmonger for a recommendation). If the mixture feels too soft, adding cornflour or chilling it in the fridge for 10-15 minutes can help firm it up. Ensure the oil is hot before frying the fish cakes to achieve a crisp exterior. ►





This extract from *Thai Anywhere and Everywhere* by Nat Thaipun (Hardie Grant Books, \$50) has been reproduced with minor GT style edits.

PLA MUK NUENG MANAO

Steamed squid with lime and chilli

SERVES 2-4 // PREP 15 MINS // COOKING 15 MINS

“In this recipe, the squid is steamed until tender and then tossed with zesty lime and chilli sauce,” says Thaipun.

500 gm squid tubes

SAUCE

60 ml (¼ cup) lime juice

60 ml (¼ cup) fish sauce

1 tbsp finely grated palm sugar

3 garlic cloves, crushed

3 birdseye chillies, finely chopped (or to taste)

Coriander, lime wedges and steamed jasmine rice, to serve

1 For squid, clean the squid tubes thoroughly and score across the width at 1cm intervals (see photo). Steam the tubes for 5-7 minutes or until cooked through and tender. Be careful not to overcook as squid can become rubbery.

2 While the squid is steaming, make sauce: combine the lime juice, fish sauce, palm sugar, garlic and chillies in a bowl. Stir until the sugar dissolves. Taste and adjust as needed to balance the flavours.

3 Once the squid is cooked, transfer it to a serving plate and pour the sauce over, ensuring it is well coated. Garnish with coriander. Serve immediately with lime wedges and steamed jasmine rice.



ROTI

Sweet roti

MAKES ABOUT 5 // PREP 12 MINS // COOK 35 MINS (PLUS RESTING)

300 gm plain (all-purpose) flour

½ tsp salt

1 tbsp sugar

2 tbsp vegetable oil

Butter or ghee, for frying
Sweetened condensed milk, for drizzling

Icing sugar, for dusting

Fresh fruit, to serve

1 For dough, in a large bowl, combine the flour, salt and sugar. Slowly add 185ml of water while mixing until the dough comes together. Knead the dough on a floured surface for 5-7 minutes until

smooth. Divide into small balls about the size of a golf ball, each weighing about 60gm. Coat each ball lightly with the oil and rest for 30 minutes.

2 To shape roti, on a clean surface, flatten each dough ball with your hands, then roll it out into a very thin circle. Alternatively, you can stretch the dough by hand, pulling gently until the dough is nearly transparent.

3 Heat a frying pan over a medium heat and add a small amount of butter or ghee. Place the stretched dough into the hot pan and fry for 2-3 minutes on each side until golden and crisp. Once cooked, fold or roll the roti.

4 Serve roti with a drizzle of condensed milk, a sprinkle of sugar and fresh fruit for a quick dessert. ●

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Travel

WHAT'S NEW IN ACCOMMODATION
AND GLOBAL EXPERIENCES.



PHOTOGRAPHY STEVIE MANN

Luxury accommodation doesn't often involve an alarm clock, but at &Beyond's new Botswana safari camps, launching in March, you might just be awoken by a lion's roar. After days spent cruising the Okavango in traditional canoes, spotting bucket-list big cats and dining under the stars, the new tents at the Sandibe and Nxabega camps have super-king beds, private bathrooms and Delta-inspired interiors. *Botswana Under Canvas*, from \$7500 per person for a seven-night journey, andbeyond.com

TRAVEL NEWS



COOL CONVENIENCE

Stocking Sydney flavours and elevated essentials for a memorable stay, Paramount House Hotel's new self-service lobby mini-mart blends an Australian milk bar concept with the convenience of Japan's ubiquitous vending machines. Treats and staples from local businesses including taramasalata from Baba's Place; assorted goodies from Penny's Cheese Shop; onigiri from Parami and a signature bottled cocktail by Bar Planet can be purchased around the clock, and are joined by luxury goods like caviar, pâté and a curated wine fridge. Beyond the edible, hotel guests can enhance a stay with vintage Nintendo Game Boys, tarot cards and chess sets borrowed via a self-service, custom-built locker. paramounthousehotel.com

Clockwise from above: Paramart, Paramount House Hotel's new self-service lobby mini-mart; Qatar Qsuite's private dining.



TOTE COUTURE

Trust Hermès to prove that style doesn't stop when the sunscreen goes on. The maison's practical Maillon Marin beach bags are made from 100 per cent cotton canvas with a woven texture for durability, and a design by Spanish-born artist José Quintanar screen-printed in a seven-step process. Even better, interior pockets will keep your sunglasses, book and room key organised. \$3580, hermes.com/au

DINING AT ALTITUDE

What a difference a door makes. On Qatar Airways, now partnered with Virgin Australia, the Qsuite (their vaunted business class offer) cocoons you in a private pod with everything in impeccably designed reach. The journey features a large screen, efficient Wi-Fi, Diptyque toiletries and an abundance of storage. When it's time to dine, the table is set with linen, quality cutlery and glassware. Multi-course, on-demand meals might feature Arabic mezze, lobster Thermidor, and berries in rose syrup, with a more-than-decent wine list. The superb service continues to a boutique hotel-style turndown that transforms the seat to proper bed, ready for you to hit the Do Not Disturb button for uninterrupted snoozing behind that closed door. qatarairways.com or virginaustralia.com

THE ARTIST AT HOME

Joining the Museo Frida Kahlo in Mexico City's charming Coyoacán district, the Museo Casa Kahlo has opened in a home originally owned by the artist's parents, called Casa Roja. Sharing a closer look at the life of Kahlo and her nearest and dearest, the new space goes beyond her body of work to display personal artefacts like childhood toys, handwritten letters, photographs from her life and even a carefully curated insect collection. The experience unfolds in renovated bedrooms, living spaces, her father Guillermo Kahlo's photography dark room, her basement art studio and the central courtyard. museocasakahlo.org



Left: the coastal-style interiors of the Elysium Suite.

NEW IN NOOSA

The prime Hastings Street location formerly occupied by Sofitel Noosa has been refurbished and transformed into Elysium Noosa. The hotel's 175 rooms and suites offer an intentional balance of indulgence and wellness. Every room has a balcony or terrace, with Wellness Suites fitted out with infrared saunas and terrace spas and the top-tier Elysium Suite boasting a private plunge pool and sweeping ocean views. The hotel's new design scheme by Melbourne studio Mitchell & Eades references European coastal style with stripes, rattan and selected artworks while retaining a connection to the site's Queensland essence. The beachy take on luxury extends to Italian restaurant Cibaria Noosa and Bar Capri, both by esteemed Sydney-based restaurateurs Alessandro and Anna Pavoni (Cibaria Manly, Postino Osteria, Ormeggio at The Spit). elysiumnoosa.com.au

A GMT WATCH IS THE ULTIMATE TOOL for travel, allowing you to track two time zones simultaneously. Standing for Greenwich Mean Time, the GMT complication is driven by an additional 24-hour hand that points to a separate hour scale, often on the bezel. Whether crossing continents or juggling different time zones for work, a GMT watch keeps you in sync. Granted, your smartphone can do the same, but there's something much more elegant about a wristwatch.

We're big fans of the Apple watch for its practicality, but there is something about the horological mastery of a GMT watch – its blend of functionality and craftsmanship – that makes it an essential companion for every stylish globetrotter.

THE LATEST LUXURY TIMEPIECES FROM AROUND THE WORLD

TIME TRAVELLERS



Clockwise from above:
Rolex GMT-Master II;
Chanel J12 GMT;
Omega Seamaster
Aqua Terra GMT;
Bulgari Aluminium GMT.

Rolex GMT-Master II watch design pairs an Everose gold 40mm case with a bi-color Cerachrom bezel, engineered for ultimate scratch resistance. Powered by the calibre 3285 automatic movement, it offers 70-hour power reserve, precision COSC certification, and dual time-zone functionality. The iconic Oyster bracelet design ensures comfort alongside uncompromising mechanical performance. \$78,800, rolex.com

The **Bulgari Aluminium GMT** pairs an aluminium case with a titanium caseback and rubber bezel, housing a precise automatic GMT movement. Its crisp white dial features a red GMT hand and luminous markers, delivering high legibility. Ultra-light construction and 100m water-resistance make it a robust, travel-ready companion on any journey. \$6400, bulgari.com

Housed in a 43mm stainless steel case, the **Omega Seamaster Aqua Terra 150m GMT Worldtimer** boasts a striking dial design featuring a polished blue ocean relief pattern of the continents. Its co-axial master chronometer caliber 8938 powers dual time-zone functionality with a 60-hour power reserve and is anti-magnetic resistant to 15,000 gauss. \$52,425 omegawatches.com

Sculpted from highly scratch-resistant matt black ceramic and steel, the **Chanel J12 GMT** houses a precise automatic calibre driving dual-time zone functionality via a dedicated 24-hour hand. Its unidirectional bezel, COSC-level accuracy, and 100-metre water-resistance make this 41mm traveller's watch a robust, ultra-modern companion across time zones. \$16,100,

THE BEST IN SKINCARE AND FRAGRANCE

BEAUTY KIT

GT's round-up of the skincare swag to keep you cool this summer.



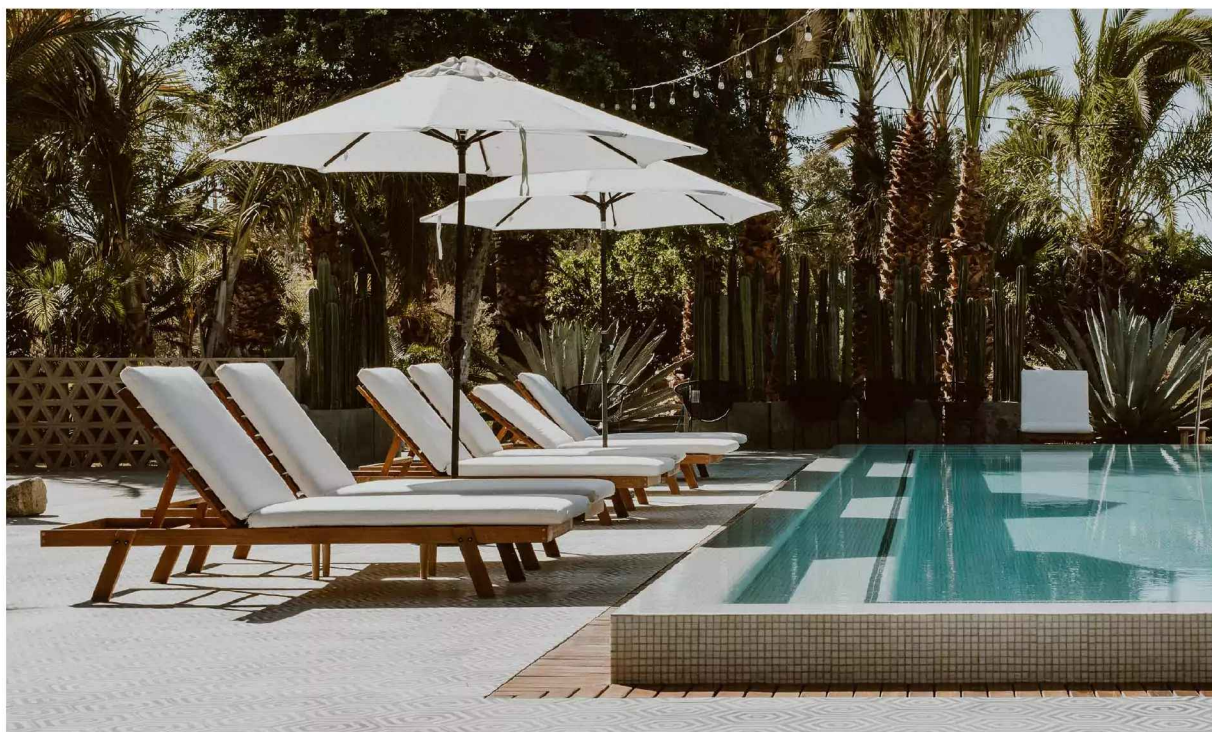
Clockwise from top left: Skin Caviar The Mist, \$280, La Prairie. Tinted SPF50 Reef Safe Face Sunscreen, \$32, SunButter. Dior Solar The After-Sun Balm, \$89, Dior. The Body Oil, \$176, Augustinus Bader. #3 The Tinted Serum SPF50+, \$204, Rationale. Sublimage L'extraite Huile Lèvres Ultimate Lip Oil, \$462, Chanel. Emma Lewisham Sunceutical SPF50 Mineral Face Crème, \$79, Mecca.

A full-page background image of a tropical jungle. In the foreground, there are dense palm fronds and other tropical plants. On the right side, a portion of a thatched roof, likely from a traditional building, is visible. The sky is a pale, clear blue, and the overall lighting suggests a bright, sunny day.

MELLOW MEXICO

In the quiet hills outside Los Cabos,
IVY CARRUTH discovers sustainability
and style sharing space.





Above: lounges at the Jungle pool. Opposite: the cocktail bar. PREVIOUS PAGE Treehouse accommodation at Acre Resort.

CABO SAN LUCAS, OR MORE SIMPLY, CABO, might be best known for its upscale tequila-fuelled nightlife and clifftop resorts, and rightly so. Everyone's best friend, Jennifer Aniston visits several times a year, and popstar-actor Selena Gomez hosted her hens' do beachside here. It's that kind of vibe, but the love affair started long before this. The iconic 1976 song "Hotel California", written about the Eagles' time here, celebrates (much) wilder times. Perhaps you know the words?

Forget that. Up in the tranquil hillsides of Ánimas Bajas, only 20 minutes from town, there's a different rhythm entirely. The pace slows. Small things are done with intent.

Acre Resort (pronounced Ah-cray) unfolds over 10 hectares of orchard and sweet-sapped agave. Part working farm, part design-driven retreat, and wholly, absolutely, uninterested in the chaos down the hill, it's like polished boho had a commitment ceremony with nature.

Cabo, in the Mexican state of Baja California Sur, isn't always an obvious choice from Australia, but it should be. Get to LAX, and from there a direct flight has you arriving in two and a half hours. Once installed at Acre, you're in good hands. Thirteen treehouses stalk the canopy like something dreamt up by a minimalist Tarzan, each wrapped in bark and softened by the light that slips through the leaves. Inside, it's texture and quiet

luxury, binoculars for bird watching and air conditioning for sleeping deeply amid the scent of citrus and a soundtrack provided by cicadas. There's WiFi if you must, but this place is designed to make you forget about life outside the perimeter.

Beyond the treehouses, a handful of private villas sit discretely among mango and papaya groves, each with a pool and outdoor shower that feels equal part indulgence and deserved invitation. Mornings start with sunlight slanting through branches and coffee taken on the deck, as you listen to the world come alive around you. The effect is quietly cinematic, a heady mix of jungle, design and calm that feels lived-in rather than staged.

Acre's spa leans into this feeling, too. It's not a simple white-dressing-gown-and-whale-noises affair; these are outdoor treatment rooms woven through the foliage. Intentionally immersive, guests choose to receive their treatments in a treehouse spa or in a private jungle setting. My pick is the Acre Nopal Detox, with a full-body exfoliation using a dried cactus-fibre paddle, then a moisturising wrap in organic Nopal (a local succulent), and finally a firm massage to detoxify all that ails you. Treatments use farm-grown herbs and local oils, and you'll want to go more than once.

Guests who prefer a slightly less passive form of restorative care can join sunrise yoga on the ►







raised wooden deck embedded into the bush. Bring your green juice and settle in for something simple and steady. The movement is nothing performative; more like a favour you feel you've done for yourself.

Then there's the food. Executive chef David Fajardo has led the kitchen for three years. Originally from Mexico City, he arrived after an 18-year relationship ended. "I was sulking," he says with a laugh. "Then a recruiter called; talk about timing." Would he be interested in moving to paradise? He would.

Acre became a reset. "I wanted to set a mood with my cooking, to do our own thing instead of chasing."

That "thing" – a blend of environmental care, local produce and culinary innovation – earned Acre one of Mexico's first Michelin Green Stars; a category introduced in 2020 to recognise restaurants that combine culinary excellence with exceptional environmental and social responsibility.

"The star raised our profile, but we've been doing this since I got here," says Fajardo, who's quick to clarify the award. "Sometimes people mistake it for a red star – the fine-dining thing – and we aren't that."

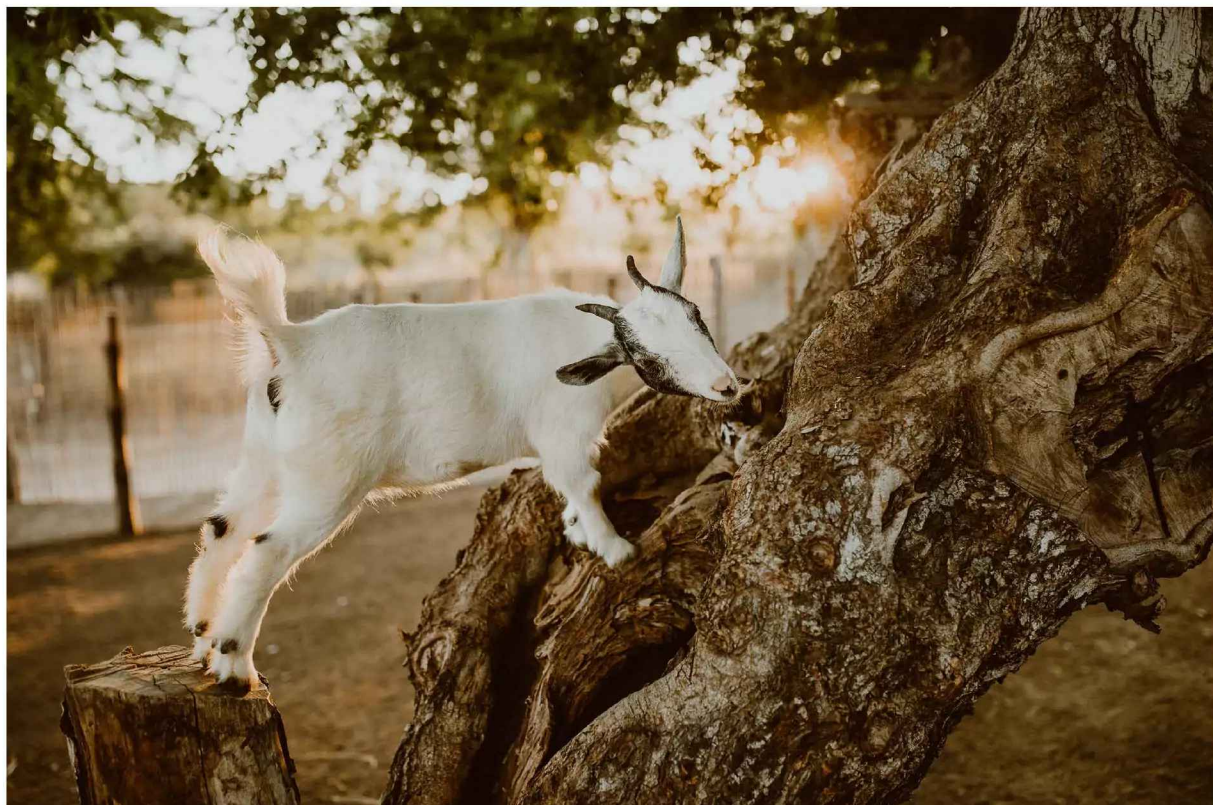
Lunch and dinner are served beneath a palm-thatched roof open to the air. Fans turn lazily but competently while little chimineas filled with smoking rosemary, lavender and spent limes keep the mozzies away.

Cooled by shade and oscillating mist, I ask Sandra, my server, for a bar recommendation. ►

Lunch and dinner are served under a palm-thatched roof open to the air. Fans turn lazily while chimineas keep the mozzies away.

Clockwise from above: Acre's kitchen; a spread made up of seasonal local produce. Opposite: alfresco dining framed by festoon lights and spiked agave.





Above: goats are part of the menagerie at Acre Resort which has an on-site animal rescue facility. Opposite: a walk through Acre's palm-filled oasis.

"Anything spicy is popular," she says, sliding a glass my way. The drink is made with chilli bitters, spiced salt, jalapeño scrub, tomato water, green tea, clarified lime and a pickled ruby beet coin. It tastes like the garden: sunburnt, vegetal, layered. A measured contradiction of heat and restraint.

There's another with mango, a special containing mezcal and burnt brown butter – smoky and far too easy to finish. "We're overflowing with mangos right now," says Fajardo, gesturing out towards the trees. "We're making tonnes of things with them, sharing them around and feeding the rest to the goats. They're happy."

I imagine them, with saffron-coloured teeth, pulp dripping from their juicy beards, looking entirely pleased with the arrangement.

The menu shifts with the farm's bounty. "We do food of the world, rooted in Mexican ingredients," he explains. "Not Mexican food."

I start with a cheddar biscuit, which seems an odd inclusion, but it's a bestseller. One bite in, I get it. Buttery and crispedged, it's sharp with cheese and moringa leaf.

A beet salad – earthy, sweet and finished with a faint hint of smoke – represents Acre's style best. "Cooking

BOOKING INFO

Accommodation at Acre Resort starts at around \$550 per night for a Treehouse, acrerestort.com

with wood and fire, that feeling is what I love," says Fajardo. Oysters, heirloom tomato caprese, a whole fish, they pick up a salty tanginess that speaks of Baja. Sometimes embers finish them off, because at Acre, even ashes do their part.

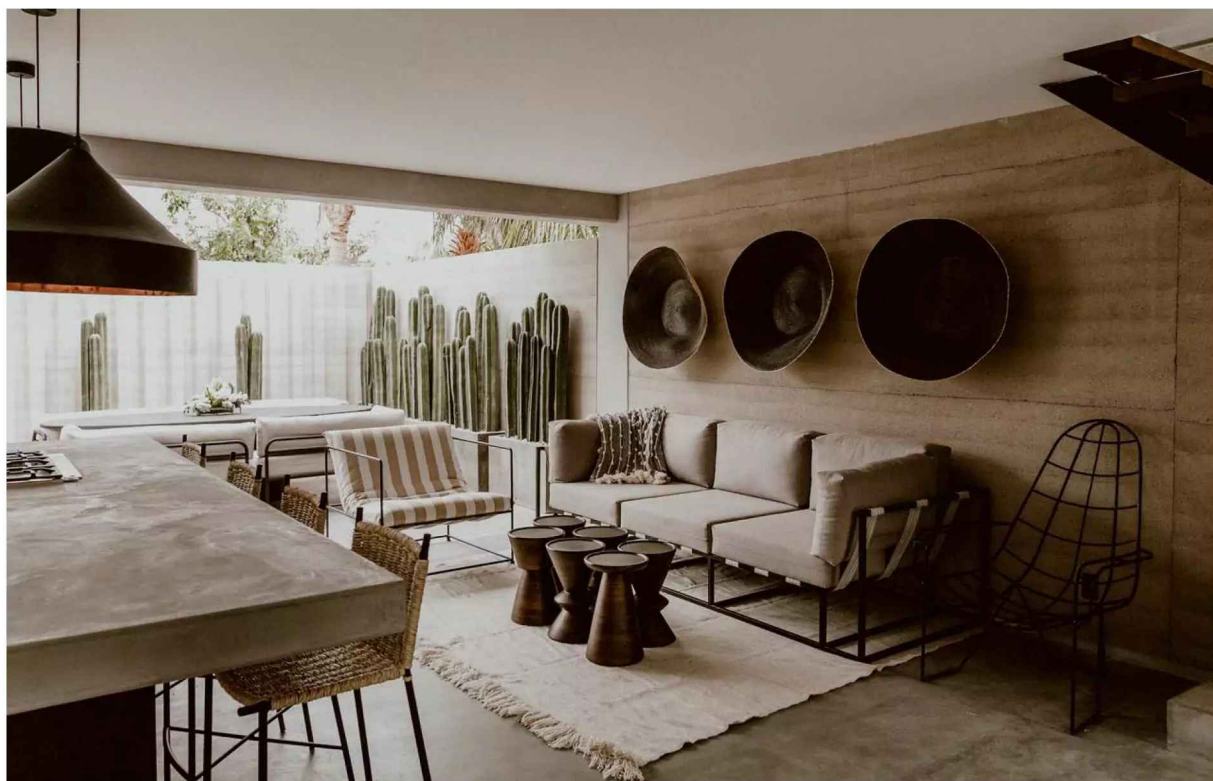
Behind the kitchen, is the farm, Fajardo's personal Narnia, which produces much of what's on the menu. Rows of herbs and chillis fill the air with green spice, alongside test plots of finger and zebra-skin limes, stands of Buddha's hand citrus. "One of the gardeners is growing something we can't even identify yet," he says, clearly delighted. "We'll see what happens."

When they can't grow what they need, they use local suppliers, and when local suppliers can't provide, the team adapts. "There are people doing great things in small batches, but I can't ask a purveyor for eight hundred kilos of tomatoes. They can't do that, so we think harder." Maybe it's green papaya instead of tomato, or fermented chilli where acid once did the work.

Acre's circular system – composting scraps, reusing greywater, minimising packaging and creating recipes based on what's best – has brought them close to zero-waste. "We aren't there yet, but we aren't far off."

For Fajardo, sustainability starts with people. ➤





Above: Acre Resort's luxurious Villa interiors.

"The real secret of this place is the team. Everyone contributes ideas, everyone is empowered in the garden, in the kitchen ... it's not my project, it's our project."

The philosophy extends beyond the property line. Acre's on-site animal rescue rehabilitates and rescues street dogs. More than a thousand have been adopted since its launch in 2019, many by guests. The program partners with local vets and shelters in Los Cabos, creating work for handlers and carers while helping reduce the stray population.

The resort also has its own stable of happy rescued horses, too. Picture a slow ride at golden hour, hooves thudding through dust while the hills blush pink. It's a whole mood. "It's part of who we are," Chef tells me. "Caring for animals, for people, for what we grow and who we feed, it's all connected."

That spirit of connection shows up in guests' experiences. Visitors can join garden walks with the horticulture team, who take pride in their product like an artist does their finest work, which is an apt metaphor. There are low-key cooking classes where you learn to make tortillas the way the kitchen does, mezcal tastings, and small-format art sessions.

The coast isn't far, if you can bring yourself to leave the property. Staff can arrange transfers to nearby swimmable beaches or link guests with trusted operators for surfing lessons or stand-up paddleboarding.



Qantas, Virgin, Delta and American Airlines fly direct to Los Angeles from Australia. From there, it's a 2.5-hour direct flight to Los Cabos International Airport.

Those beaches are stunning though varied; a mix of postcard-perfect calm and look-but-don't-swim drama. Along the Pacific side, the waves hit hard with a strong undertow and steep drop offs, which is why these stretches stay free of cafés and clutter. They're ideal for a lazy or an impromptu photo shoot. The Sea of Cortez side is a different story entirely: Medano Beach is lively with beach bars, lounges, vendors and all the conveniences you could want. Chileno and Santa Maria are gentler bays with clear water and snorkel rentals. Palmilla feels polished and peaceful with just enough services to make a day of it.

In the end, perhaps it's this storm of synergy that makes Acre more than just a resort. It's a self-contained ecosystem: a place where waste becomes compost, where gardeners experiment freely and where a chef recovering from heartbreak found purpose again.

"You can hear yourself think here," says Fajardo. "You see the result of what you do. There's meaning."

Walking back through the canopy, mangos on the ground like big orange eggs, it strikes me that Acre succeeds not because it tries to be everything, but because it trusts in the things it already is – calm, simple, human. For a place built on abundance, restraint might be its most compelling luxury. ●

WILD THING

Calm prints, cool knits and earthy accessories make the perfect capsule wardrobe for a nature getaway.



- 1** Oasis hat in Natural, \$250, Camilla and Marc. **2** Bedrock top in Ivory, \$290, Viktoria & Woods. **3** MG Jewelry Caffè resin bangle set, \$168, Wolf & Badger. **4** Thalia Slip skirt, \$305, Rat & Boa. **5** Ballet Flats in Fishnet in Garnet red, \$1320, ALAÏA. **6** Athena & Co Gem Collar necklace in Silver Natural, \$190, Boteh. **7** Screen sunglasses in Marble Green, \$590, Loewe. **8** Woven Beaded bag in Black/White, \$295, Wynn Hamlyn. **9** Ocean Waves cuff in Silver, \$189, Maurie and Eve.

GOLD COAST

Mondrian Gold Coast

We check in and check out the country's hottest hotel openings. This month, we visit Australia's first Mondrian, located on the bright and breezy shores of Burleigh Heads.



3 First Ave,
Burleigh Heads,
Qld

From \$525 per
night for a
Studio King

This newly built, architecturally designed hotel taps into Burleigh's local magnetism while adding a glitzy layer of global appeal from a key player in the lifestyle hotel space. The brand, originally conceptualised by hotelier extraordinaire Ian Schrager with the opening of the famed Mondrian Hotel in West Hollywood, has gone on to open in similarly glamorous locations across the world, including Cannes, Ibiza, Mexico City, and now the sandy shores of Burleigh Heads. Upon entry, a portico splices together archways, stucco walls and steel accents, with a petite check-in space that encourages you through to the hotel's outdoor area. Teal striped sun lounges flank the marble pool, joined by cream umbrellas and a cedar DJ booth, with views out to Burleigh's Norfolk pines and the stretching beach. It's elevated and chic, but don't miss the chance to lean into the Gold Coast vibe; during our stay, we spot an amusing incident with a stretch hummer in the parking bay and a big-name influencer pitching a skincare line at lunch, which definitely adds to the atmosphere. mondrianhotels.com/gold-coast

FACILITIES
24-hour concierge Yes
WiFi Yes
Room service Yes
Gym Yes
Spa Yes
Pool Yes
Parking Yes
EV charging Yes

STAY

WORDS: JORDAN KRETCHMER. PHOTOGRAPHY: CONTENT LION (LITO) & JUSTIN NICHOLAS (MONDRIAN INTERIORS & BEACH).



THE ROOMS

Each spacious room is washed in neutral grey, creating an ideal contrast for the main attraction: the million-dollar views of the Pacific Ocean, Burleigh Headland or the hinterland framed by floor-to-ceiling windows. A small balcony allows you to take it all in, even from the plump king bed, thanks to automatic blinds. A jungle-print sofa and rust bouclé accents bring the fun, Le Labo Santal 33 amenities deliver chic indulgence, and the in-room beach bag and long linen robe are ideal for taking poolside. Opt for a suite, and the added kitchenette and laundry will guarantee a more flexible stay.



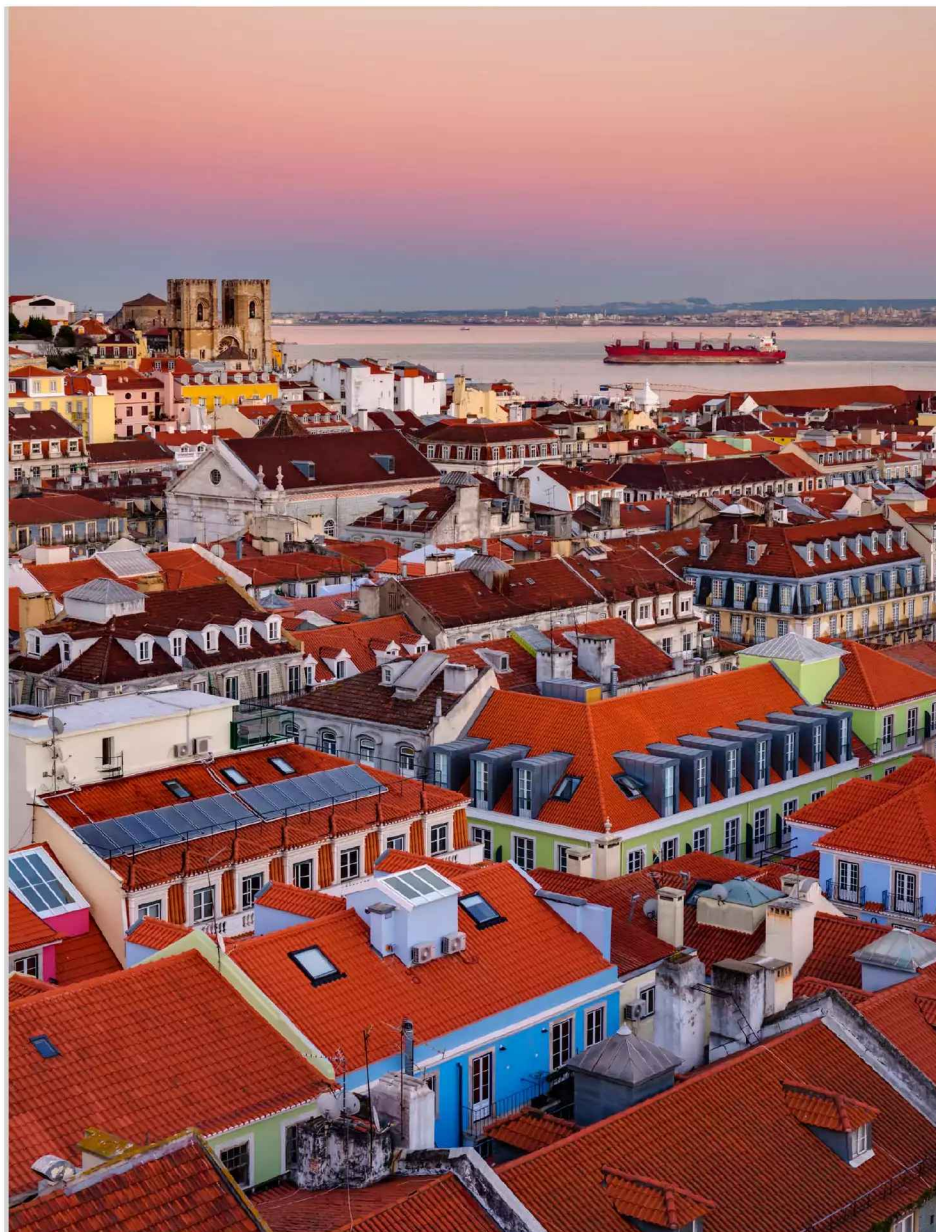
FOOD & DRINK

Seafood grill **Haven** is sprawling but still feels intimate, offering a spiffy showcase of Queensland's fruits de mer. While there are a few solo diners and couples, most of the tables are filled with lively locals getting in on a slice of the action. A flame-kissed red emperor fillet from Cairns comes with a citrus-charged hollandaise; while hand-picked spanner crab from nearby Brunswick Heads is seasoned with capers, dill and crème fraîche, ready to be spread across the accompanying waffle. There are also lofty seafood towers, an impressive lobster frites and fresh oysters to boot. Downstairs at **Lito** the restaurant spills out onto the pavement, with locals and their French bulldogs grabbing iced lattes, while hotel guests pop in for a two-course breakfast. The cavernous space is bustling from day-to-night, transitioning to an easygoing Italian restaurant for lunch and dinner.

Clockwise from top left: Two Bed Ocean Home balcony and lounge; One Bed Suite interiors; Italian lemon meringue tart at Lito; Haven's dining room. Opposite: poolside at the Mondrian Gold Coast.



Postcards from Lisbon



The food in Portugal's hilly coastal capital is definitely something to write home about, reports **JULIA D'ORAZIO**.



Above: the entrance to Lisbon's two-Michelin-starred Belcanto. Opposite: Encanto's apple with chestnut purée, wild mushrooms, green strawberries and ponzu. PREVIOUS PAGES Left: the yellow funicular, Elevador da Bica, in Lisbon. Right: the city's rooftops.

RECEIVING A POSTCARD FEELS SENTIMENTAL and novel. These days, with Instagram and FaceTime, there seems to be no need to document far-flung adventures for friends and family. Who can be bothered with the painstaking quest to locate a stamp in foreign lands, anyway? And when it would arrive would be anyone's guess.

Delivery is much swifter at Lisbon's famed Belcanto, where the postman masquerades as a white-gloved waiter.

"To start your Lisbon experience," says my server Nelson, smiling as he places the palm-sized memento into a place card holder. Staring back at me is a watercolour illustration of the olive-green restaurant door I walked through just moments ago. More than a charming welcome, the postcards, designed by in-house sommelier Rostyslav Fedotov, are a creative way to present Belcanto's nine-course tasting menu.

"Each postcard will feature a design that complements the dish itself," Nelson continues. "On the back are some words that help us understand what the chef had in his mind when he created these dishes."

The chef in question is José Avillez. In 2012, Portugal's culinary visionary transformed a former men's club in the heart of the vibrant Chiado district, reimagining the historical space as Belcanto. The 45-seat restaurant features stone and brick vaulted ceilings, modern chandeliers, wooden floors, and windows that drench the dining room with

sunlight. Its surroundings – a blend of old and new – aptly reflect Avillez's take on contemporary Portuguese cuisine.

Belcanto is the capital's first two-Michelin-starred restaurant. Adding to its prestige, it currently ranks 42nd on The World's 50 Best Restaurants list. The distinct, gastronomic journey at Belcanto is guided by Avillez's childhood memories of family cooking traditions, seasons, Portugal's diverse landscapes, and the Atlantic Ocean. With each course, he applies artistic techniques to locally revered ingredients.

"The idea of the chef is to take the role of the painter, and it will be displayed this afternoon through multiple designs," Nelson monologues. "The white tablecloth will be the canvas."

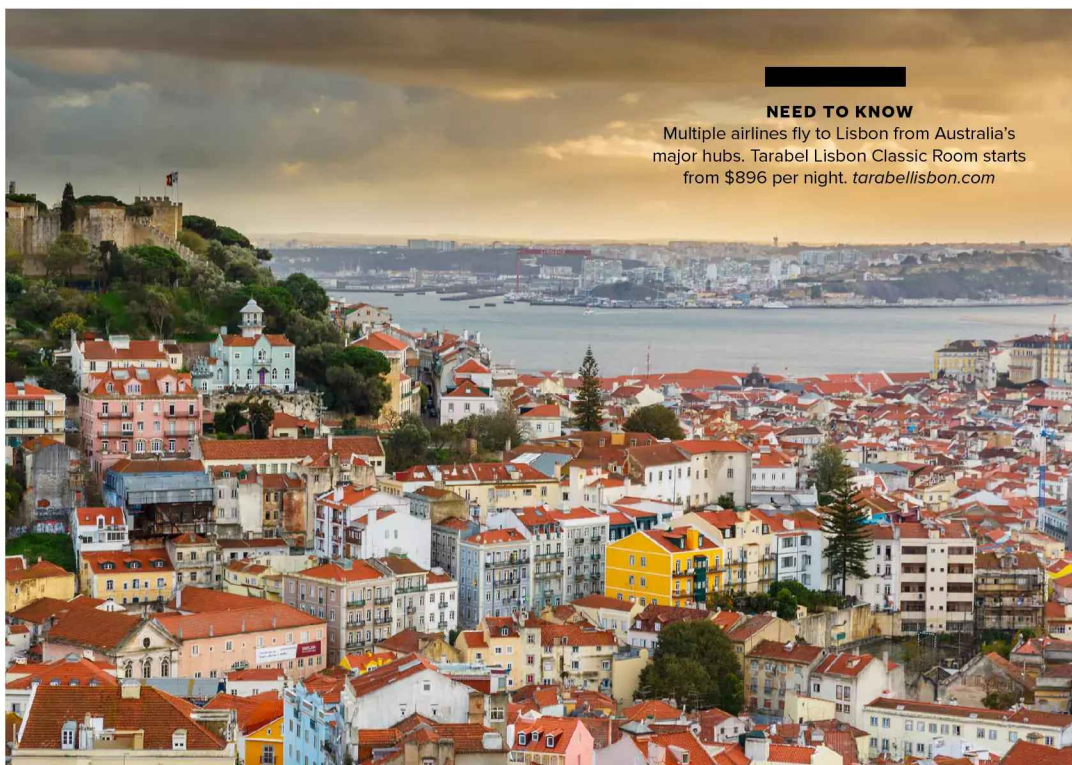
The first masterstroke, a tiered stand that looks like a spacecraft from *Star Wars*, lands on my table. Its delicate gold legs hold four oval plates, upon which snacks in a bold palette of black, green, red and yellow are presented. A gold sphere of partridge escabeche and foie gras mimics foil-wrapped chocolate. In one bite of crunchy seaweed, caviar and a mix of crustaceans, I voyage the Atlantic.

Also found along the Portuguese and Spanish coasts is the sought-after scarlet shrimp. An outdoor pastime is reinvented in a playful plating of the plump prawn: its grilled flesh is topped with fiery red pepper sauce and swathed in smoked rice ashes and intertwining twigs of blackened tempura to resemble a campfire. ►

The gastronomic journey at Belcanto is guided by Avillez's childhood memories of family cooking traditions, seasons, Portugal's diverse landscapes, and the Atlantic Ocean.







Above: the colourful houses in Lisbon. Opposite: striped umbrellas and lounges poolside at Tarabel Lisbon.

Avillez's innovative approach spreads like wildfire next door at sister restaurant, Encanto. Opened in 2022, this haute-vegetarian, dinner-only eatery received its first Michelin star before it had even been open a year. Chef Diogo Formiga is spearheading Avillez's root-friendly revolution here, incorporating sustainable practices such as zero waste and supporting local farmers. Collective efforts have reaped rewards for the plant-based dining room – the restaurant has been awarded a Green Star, while Formiga has one knife from The Best Chef Awards 2025, which recognises culinary excellence.

Like its feted neighbour, Encanto guides curious herbivores through Portugal's landscapes in 12 "moments" presented as edible art. A vibrant concoction of chestnut purée, wild mushrooms, green strawberries and ponzu sauce is served in a hollowed apple. Under the apple's lid, a gelatine of housemade apple kombucha. Speaking of drinks, Encanto offers biodynamic wines, handcrafted juices and infusions alongside its kombucha.

Avillez and Formiga are not alone in redefining traditional Portuguese cuisine in the City of Seven Hills. In 2025, chef Marlene Vieira became the first Portuguese woman in 30 years to be awarded a Michelin star at her restaurant, Marlene, next to the Lisbon Cruise Terminal. After a decade working in London with another Portuguese chef (Nuno Mendes), António Galapito returned to his

hometown to open Prado, a farm-to-table restaurant in Baixa, the city's downtown.

A few hills away in the upmarket neighbourhood Lapa, a new era of Lisbon hospitality has been ushered in. Boutique hotel Tarabel Lisbon, a reimagined 19th-century mansion overlooking the city's calming artery, the Tagus River, opened in September 2025. Mirroring its diplomatic neighbours, Tarabel has a discreet entrance, leading to a lavish sanctuary.

The Tarabel offers a home-away-from-home experience. French owner and interior designer Rose Fournier has styled the aspirational space with a melange of antique furniture, worldly trinkets, and charming aesthetics from her homeland (white interiors, bespoke upholstery adding pops of colour). A large birdcage – a flea-market find – greets guests in the lobby, kicking off a feathery theme that's scattered throughout the hotel like Easter eggs.

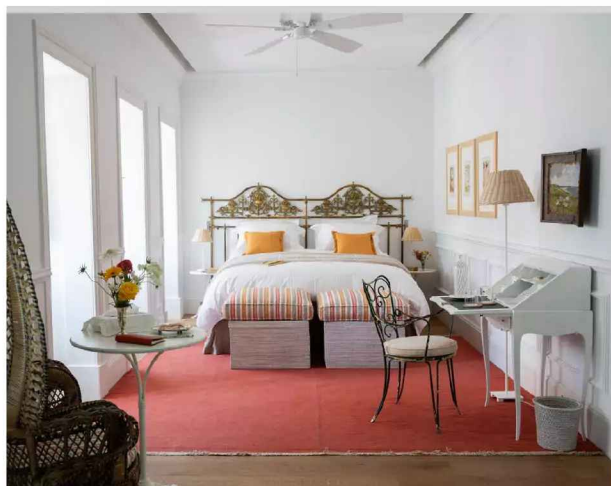
Each of the nine distinct residences is open-plan, centred around a claw-foot bathtub. More reason to stay idle is the Deluxe Suite's terrace, a joyous spot to soak in the sun. Similarly, the terraced gardens below are dotted with loungers and dining areas. From poolside, the hotel's light-blue façade, hedge gardens, azulejo mural and white-and-yellow striped furnishings could be the subject of Tarabel's own watercolour postcard.

Like many who have their favourite spot in a dining room, I quickly choose mine at Tarabel. ►



Clockwise from above: Tarabel Lisbon's charming interiors by designer Rose Fournier are a mix of antiques and trinkets; and its Classic Room.

Sitting right by the French windows, I watch life slowly unfold on the river as I tuck into a continental breakfast banquet.



Sitting right by the French windows, I watch life slowly unfold on the river as I tuck into a generous continental breakfast banquet: warm breads and pastries, shaved ham, local cheeses, eggs to order, housemade jams, seasonal fruits and juices. Gloriously, there's no strict cut-off time to order, so the morning repast can bleed into lunch.

Hours later, with a returned appetite, I'm back warming my rose pink chair for dinner. Representing the new generation here is Afonso Blazquez Raposo. The young chef is at the helm of the restaurant in the hotel's foyer, where the menu features classic Portuguese dishes given a modern twist. With dinner service only available to hotel guests, Raposo is able to thoughtfully curate each dish, complementing Tarabel's homely ethos.

"When the people are eating, they really feel that this was made with so much care and love," he says of his dishes.

My "modest" three-course meal includes lime-cured scallops with roasted gazpacho, beautifully topped with freeze-dried raspberries. Next, Iberian pork and Atlantic clams come served with a liberal pour of Porto wine jus, letting the Duoro Valley flow on my plate. Then a chocolate moelleux with a dollop of hazelnut ice-cream and cocoa nougatine for a nightcap. It's something to write home about ... From Portugal with love. ●

TABLE FOR ONE

The classic combination of navy and tan ensures a refined look that's ideal for exploring any culinary hotspot.



1 Prada Symbole sunglasses, \$685, Prada. **2** Open-collar mercerised-jersey polo shirt in Navy, \$125, Cos. **3** Tournis Tresse Trio silk bracelet in Mordoré, \$640, Hermès. **4** Relaxed-fit trousers in cotton twill in White, \$379, Hugo Boss. **5** Heritage Palissy Weekend grained leather bag in Mustard Yellow, \$2100, Carl Friedrik. **6** Traditional belt in Chestnut, \$149, RM Williams. **7** Fleet T-Bar loafers in Taupe, \$419, Aquila. **8** Beoplay H100 Ultimate over-ear headphones \$3300, Bang & Olufsen.



TWILIGHT ZONE

Iceland's midnight sun, geothermal wonders and rugged terrain make for a summer drive unlike any other, writes **NOELLE FAULKNER**.





ICELAND IN SUMMER IS A PLACE THAT MAKES you question time itself, where the sun sits in the sky for 20 hours and where the landscape is continuously forming under your feet. It may be best known for its bucket list-worthy winters, but in the warmer months, Iceland wakes from its slumber. The snow recedes to reveal a landscape alive with colour and motion; rivers break free, meadows bloom, puffins and terns take to the skies, and the light stays golden well into the midnight hour.

We're not the only ones to have made the 17,000-kilometre journey here – our mechanical steed on this road trip also counts Australia as its spiritual home. The mighty Ford Ranger is not just an Australian (and global) bestseller, but one of two cars designed and developed in Victoria to withstand the toughest conditions. Last year, Ford launched its latest evolution – a Ranger Plug-in Hybrid, which combines the toughness of a 2.3-litre turbocharged four-cylinder petrol engine with the efficiency of an 11.8kWh (usable) battery and 75kW electric motor, and we've come here to test the ute's limits on unfamiliar ground.

We've based ourselves at the chic and well-positioned Reykjavik Edition hotel.



PHOTOGRAPHY GETTY IMAGES.



Above: a lighthouse and the coastline of Reykjavik. Opposite, clockwise from top: pretty houses in Reykjavik; the Ford Ranger PHEV on the road in Iceland. PREVIOUS PAGES Fjallsárlón is a glacier lake at the south end of the Icelandic glacier Vatnajökull.

Located in the heart of the city, it overlooks the Old Harbour port with views from the coast to Mount Esja and the legendary Snæfellsjökull glacier. It's a few minutes from the charming city centre, which comes alive during the summer with festivities, and it's within walking distance of Reykjavik Art Museum Hafnarhúsið and the architectural wonder of Hallgrímskirkja, Reykjavik's famous modern cathedral. The Edition offers a warm welcome with an open fireplace lounge area that's buzzing with life and washed in Icelandic minimalist interiors, including fur, ceramics, volcanic stone and warm woods throughout – a theme that continues into the luxurious rooms.

In an attempt to deal with jet lag under the midnight sun, I pay a visit to the hotel's lush hammam and hydrotherapy pool; a modern play on the local geothermal pool traditions, with locally inspired drinks on offer. The next morning, we enjoy breakfast at Edition's Michelin Guide-recommended restaurant, Tides, and set sail into the land of ice and fire.

Heading north on Route 1, the roads are smooth and cinematic, our Ford Ranger PHEV in hybrid mode devouring them with torque-y hunger and a quiet ease, allowing us to soak up the scenery.

We pass through valleys sandwiched by glacial rivers and purple fields of tall Alaskan lupine flowers, and soon, the vast mountains rise before us. It's no trouble for the Ranger PHEV, which Ford claims can drive up to 49 kilometres in EV-only mode – more than the daily needs of the average driver – and can regenerate power using the petrol engine. In switching between those modes, it's so quiet and refined, we barely notice the petrol engine kicking in. It also has more power and torque than its diesel siblings, 180 kilograms more payload ability than any other plug-in hybrid dual-cab in the Australian market (up to 973 kilograms, variant dependent) and can tow 3500 kilograms, not that we'll have any need for that function today.

Our first stop is at Kleif Farm, a private farmstay powered by the country's impressive geothermal network, in the hills of Mosfellsbær. Here, we test our vehicle's impressive and class-leading party trick. You see, the Ranger PHEV's battery can double as a generator, even with the engine off, eliminating the need for diesel generators. With up to 6.9kW of total output, and two 15amp outlets in the back, it can run a full campsite, power tools and more directly from its tray. It's an impressively useful ►



Above: Icelandic horses. Opposite, clockwise from top: Reykjavik Edition's The Roof; the spacious tray of the Ford Ranger PHEV.

feature adventurers will no doubt love. To our joy, Kleif Farm is also home to a friendly herd of Icelandic horses. The only breed allowed on the island, the Icelandic horse is adored for its small stature, thick coat and unique gait. Having survived centuries of harsh winters and rugged terrain, they've become an emblem of the nation – resilient, beautiful and strong – and are so protected that, should a horse ever leave, it is not permitted to return.

This journey is not your usual Icelandic road trip, our next leg taking us beyond the well-worn tourist track, as we head east towards the centre of the island. We cue up a playlist to test the user-friendly connectivity and 10-speaker setup (variant dependent) and are cruising in comfort. Then, the scenery changes again – an otherworldly barren landscape stretches as far as the eye can see, with the occasional geyser shooting steam into the sky and the odd flock of wandering sheep. A snake-like road named Grafningsvegur Efri takes us to the southern side of Þingvallavatn, a pristine glacial lake with black volcanic sands, which forces us to pause and take in the sublime views. A few more spirited roads later, we reach the base of Grensdalur, one of the oldest volcanic

systems in the Hengill area, ready for our toughest traverse yet.

We've been paired up with a guide, who leads us out onto the rocky landscape, warning us that running glacial water crossings, gravel tracks and steep climbs are ahead. Of course, the Ranger is flawless, traversing, climbing and splashing its way through the land with a near-arrogance, as we switch between our four-wheel-drive settings and specific off-road modes for each terrain. The advanced multiple and 360-degree camera system makes rock spotting easy, and the real challenge is not the terrain but our temptation to look around in awe. This trek culminates in an incredibly steep climb to the top of the mountain, as if we've just landed on Mars, before turning to the hill descent control, which helps us get down the sharp gradient with unnerving ease. It's worth noting how efficient and smooth this is in the Ranger; while other similar systems have a tendency to feel jerky, this was an incredibly smooth and composed descent.

The back roads of this region are paved with geothermal pipelines and eggy smells in the air. Still driving on dirt, our route takes us past a vast network of alien-looking polyhedron-shaped structures with endless steam rushing out the top. These roads lead to the grand Hellsheiði Power

CAR
Ford Ranger PHEV

VARIANTS
Four

PRICE
From \$71,990 to
\$86,990, plus
on-road-costs

POWERTRAIN
2.3-litre turbo-
petrol plug-in
hybrid, 11.8kWh
(usable) battery

FUEL RANGE
2.9L/100km

**MAX POWER
/TORQUE**
207kW/697Nm

0-100KM/H
6.8 seconds



PHOTOGRAPHY NIKOLAS KOENIG (REYKJAVIK EDITION).

Station. Open to the public, it looks like a modern art gallery but is one of the largest single geothermal power stations in the world, and an enormous feat of engineering and sustainable energy, supplying power and hot water to the people of Reykjavik. Iceland has plenty of things to marvel over, including, it would seem, those of human origin.

Soon enough, still filled with wonder and adrenaline, we return to the Reykjavik Edition's panoramic rooftop bar to watch the sun refuse to go down, and reflect on the very small portion of Iceland we explored – this is a place where there is always more to unearth. Despite the hardcore connotations that surround the Ford Ranger – a clearly capable, comfortable and made-for-anything car – the Icelandic summer drive has left us with an unexpected appreciation of the meditative drive. Iceland, like many places around the world, forces you to slow down and be present – something modern life could use more of. Even the sun, continuously in the sky, seems to demand attention, reverence and awe. And perhaps that's the point: to be reminded that power doesn't always mean speed, sometimes it's utility made simple and muscle made mindful. ●

Accessing some of Europe's finest culinary destinations by sea
is a major perk of cruising, writes **LARISSA DUBECKI**.

MEDITERRANEAN COASTING





Above: the deck and infinity pool on the Viking Jupiter. Opposite: Cattedrale di Santa Maria del Fiore (Florence Cathedral).

THE CAMPANILE DI GIOTTO CHIMING ACROSS THE medieval streets of Florence could be the world's most impressive lunch bell. The soul-stirring peals serenading the city every day at 11.30am are a signal for locals to line up near the buzzing Sant'Ambrogio market for lampredotto. The famous slow-cooked tripe, stuffed into crunchy panini with salsa verde and spicy red pepper oil at street stall Pollini, is such "un'offerta allettante" (a tempting offer) that a quick sandwich becomes an appetiser before a multi-course lunch at the rustic Cibrèo Trattoria next door.

Excessive? Si. But in my defence, your honour, I'm only following orders. Before unleashing her charges for an afternoon's wandering, tour leader Francesca had offered her mid-autumn advice for maximising the joys of a Florentine meal: "Look for the pumpkin, the porcini, the puntarelle, all the seasonal ingredients. Look for what the locals will be eating."

An admirable follow-up act to my tripe sanga starter, Cibrèo delivers all the above, then adds a chicken liver pâté rich with iron tang and tissue-thin slices of pinkly roasted girello shimmering beneath a buttery, white

wine-infused broth. It's as Tuscan as the grippy sangiovese that unites the meal in a heavenly choir.

The chance to explore Italy's Renaissance gem for a day is just one excellent option while on a Viking cruise. The Iconic Western Mediterranean journey, a seven-night jaunt from Rome to Barcelona, is a synaesthetic whirlwind of history and culture that's filled with Medicis, Grimaldis and a parade of popes. It also shows that the world's most mythologised coastline still harbours secrets, as micro-explorers of its famous stops can discover when they step ashore.

"People know Pisa because of a mistake when they were putting up a tower, but Livorno has so much to offer," says Francesca when the other cruise guests have departed from the Tuscan port town to see the famous Leaning Tower. The canals that have seen Livorno dubbed "little Venice" are lined in summer with small bars, while year-round its cafés serve the proudly local invention of ponce. Pronounced "pon-chay", this potent mix of espresso and rum, syrupy with sugar and lemon zest, proves the perfect ►



The trip reveals the tactical advantages of exploring the Mediterranean by ship.

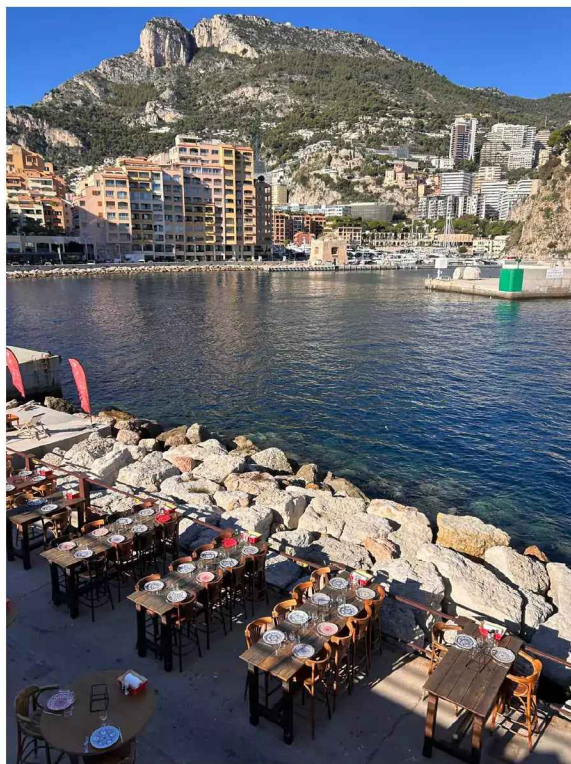


morning pick-me-up to enjoy while exploring the sprawling covered market, which threatens to induce the culinary equivalent of Stendhal syndrome with its endless stalls representing every spoke of the flavour wheel. It's truffle season, which gives the perfect excuse to DIY a few pungent and precious slivers into a "cinque cinque" sandwich, another local specialty of oily chickpea pancake tucked inside a roll (well, when in Livorno).

Another excursion takes us on an immersion into the iconic Tuscan landscape of vineyards, poplars and cypress trees to Borgo Machiavelli, an estate where Niccolò Machiavelli penned *The Prince* in 1513. It's hard to decide which is more thrilling: the winery's chianti or a traipse through the secret tunnel used by the infamous pragmatist to reach the tavern on the other side of the road.

The trip quickly reveals the tactical advantages of exploring the Mediterranean by ship. There's no battling the nail-biting roads, "hooked and corkscrewed on the edge of nothing", as American writer John Steinbeck put it. The far more peaceful alternative involves gazing at the colour-shifting water from your private balcony with a cold drink delivered by the room service butler.

The ocean is an inky black for the early morning arrival in Monaco but it's no less spectacular. Behind



Above: fresh oysters and prawns at Les Perles de Monte-Carlo; and its alfresco tables at Port de Fontvieille. Opposite, clockwise from top: sailboats with Cathédrale de la Major (Marseille Cathedral) in the background; and The Restaurant on the *Viking Jupiter*.

Viking Jupiter, the sunrise looks like a toddler has been let loose on the Pantone chart's orange swatches. To the ship's front (sorry, the bow), Monte Carlo's shock of high rises shimmer like gold dust in the dark.

Daylight reveals the thrilling sight of the 85-metre-high Monaco Oceanographic Museum, a jaw-dropping expression of Baroque Revival that speaks of a country with a hefty bank balance. Carved dramatically into a cliff with its toes almost touching the sea, it's worth a visit for the façade alone, which is wildly adorned with marine-themed sculptures including lobsters, seaweed and shellfish. And if that turns thoughts to lunch, it's worth walking to the end of the Port de Fontvieille pier, where outdoor restaurant Les Perles de Monte-Carlo delivers a parade of crustaceans and a beautifully laidback vibe.

Heading back on board the 930-guest *Viking Jupiter* in time for its evening sailing is no hardship. Guests gather over pre-dinner Campari Spritzes before heading off to explore the multiple dining venues, including sushi and mighty legs of king crab at The World Café buffet, Dover sole in butter sauce at The Restaurant or fall-apart osso bucco at Manfredi's Italian.

The food wonkery continues as we sail west. It's tempting to think that the pale, sun-bleached stone of Marseilles was specifically designed as the fetching backdrop for Provencal rosé. Along the old port,

fishmongers spruik the day's catch and bistrots serve slappingly briny oysters. If the journey's indulgence is starting to take a toll, salvation can be found opposite the Palais du Justice, where grape juice kiosk Station Uvale serves an alcohol-free foil to its vinous alter ego. "We're the only one left," says suave proprietor Yannis Amokreze of the uvale stands that dotted the city early last century, though "people are becoming interested in the health properties again. Grape juice detoxifies the body – it's excellent for the liver and digestion."

By the time we reach the Costa Brava, the Med has changed hue again to a mackerel-like shimmer of blues and greens. The adopted playground of Salvador Dali and Pablo Picasso, this part of the Spanish coastline is a heady mix of fishing port freneticism and peaceful pockets where time appears to stand still.

One such place is Cala s'Alguer. Backed by pine forest, this rocky cove of whitewashed fishermen's houses, almost painful in their cubist perfection, is worth the three-kilometre walk along the coastal road from the port of Palamós. Perhaps calling it a secret is going too far – the Catalan government has named the little stretch a Cultural Asset of National Interest – but on this blustery day it's a quiet scene presided over by a cat with the comically grizzled face of a sea captain. Flicking his tail with feline disdain, he quietly bears witness to the Mediterranean's eternal ebb and flow. ●

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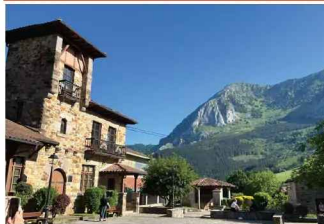
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THE ART OF Viewing the world like a sailor

When you travel by sea, you never look at a destination the same way again, writes **ANNA HART**.

ON A TRIP TO CAPE TOWN TWO years ago, I met my sailor friend, Paul, for oysters and chardonnay. (Yes, I have a sailor in every port.) He told me about the three-week crossing they'd just made from the Falkland Islands.

I told him about my upcoming hiking trip near Durban, casually mentioning that I wasn't sure if Durban was north or south of Cape Town. Paul laughed at me, and the next day, staring at an 18th-century navigation map at the South African Naval Museum, I understood how daft I'd sounded. Cape Town is famously the southernmost city on the continent of Africa. It was developed from a small Khoikhoi settlement into a port and resupply station for the Dutch East India Company, a key stop between Europe and India, centuries before British colonial rule. Cape Town is Cape Town because of its southness, and its geographical location is something no sailor would ever forget.

I knew this, but had somehow misplaced all that knowledge. To add to my shame, I had been to Cape Town three times prior. I can have an intelligent chat about community garden projects in the Khayelitsha township, or about interviewing Nelson Mandela's former prison guard, or about Ntsiki Biyela, the first black and female winemaker in Stellenbosch. I could go on. The point is, I'm not a Cape Town dummy. But as a writer

focused on culture, food and society, when I experience a place, it is through a cultural, culinary and sociological lens. Not a geographical lens.

Still, I am grateful for this humiliating conversation, because it shamed me into paying more attention to geography. Seeing the world through a sailor's eyes – or simply spending a bit of time staring at a map beforehand – has united geography and history in my mind. Now I fully understand that things happen to a place because of where it is. After all, for centuries, a sizeable chunk of human history was determined by where men sailed to. (Where greedy men sailed to and did

Arriving by sea, as travellers did for centuries, forces us to see a destination differently.

terrible things, to be more precise.) History is geography, and vice versa; they aren't separate subjects, the way I was taught to think at school.

Friends of mine report having similar epiphanies on yachting trips or cruise holidays. Arriving by sea, as travellers did for centuries, forces us to see a destination differently. We learn to see safe harbours, we see proximity and

links to other countries, we see fruit trees and other glimpses of abundance. It's much easier to see the appeal of a coastal destination from the sea than from the bus station, that's for sure.

Since adopting this new way of viewing the world, I've sailed in an expedition cruise vessel to South Georgia, an wildlife-dominated island protected by its remoteness from humans mucking everything up. I've interviewed a culinary anthropologist on a trip to Belize, where she helped me understand all the country's ethnicities through its food – every dish a history lesson in colonisation, slavery and immigration. I'm from Ireland and I've

visited New York plenty of times, but it was only very recently that I really grasped the journey taken by early Irish immigrants, and how the location of my favourite Irish bars are no accident; it has everything to do with the old docks near the Battery in Lower Manhattan,

and the Lower East Side. Likewise, Sydney, Singapore, Istanbul, San Francisco... these cities all make total sense from the water... or if you stare at Google Maps for long enough.

I've resolved to do a lot more travelling by sea, but I didn't need to sail in order to learn to see the world through a sailor's eyes. I just had to have an embarrassing chat with one. ●



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